



VENEZIA







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VENEZIA

BY

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(N. D'ANVERS)

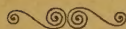
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY H. D. TRAILL, D.C.L.

WITH 210 FULL-PAGE AND TEXT ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS

BY

ETTORE TITO

TONY GRUBHOFER, LUIGI CIMA, MAINARDO PAGANI
GUGLIELMO BERTI, EMANUELE BRUGNOLI, MILLO
BORTOLUZZI, CESARE LAURENTI
EGISTO LANCEROTTO, ETC.



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INTRODUCTION.

IF any city ever deserved or could deserve the extravagant praise of satisfying the last need of life for those who look upon it, that city surely is not Naples, but Venice. If there be any earthly sight which you should "see and then die," it is on the Adriatic rather than the main Mediterranean waters that it must be sought. For after all it is the spectacle of the unique in character, superadded to the transcendent in beauty, which alone justifies a *Nunc Dimittis*. Lovely as is the Bay of Naples, its primacy of the picturesque is not unchallenged. It has rivals not a few, and, as some hold, victorious rivals, in the admiration of the world. There is at any rate so much that resembles it in beauty that a man might reasonably live on in the expectation of one day finding something which surpasses it. But Venice, by sheer force of situation, inexorably forbids any similar hope. There is no other City of the Sea—for Amsterdam, its pale reflection in the north, is merely a sea-side city; no other habitation of men which has literally risen from the salt waters of a gulf, which has canals for its main thoroughfares, and boats for its vehicles, and piles for the foundations of its houses. These ever-present, overshadowing facts—these and the charm and strangeness of them, the novelty of the visual effects to which they lend themselves, and of the sensations which they excite—combine to place Venice in a category of her own. It is of course possible to admire other cities more enthusiastically; it is not even difficult, especially at certain seasons of the year, to love other cities more ardently; but what it is not possible to do is to compare these objects of your admiration or affection with the Queen of the Adriatic. It is not that she charms in a different degree, but that her fascination is something totally distinct in kind.

The sense of its unlikeness to all else on the earth's surface is never absent from you; but to obtain that feeling in its highest intensity, as well as to receive the first impression of this world-wonder with the greatest freshness, it is best of course to approach it from the sea. To cross to Venice from Trieste during a summer night, and to drop quietly down at half-steam in the grey of the morning, through the watery suburb of the sea-built city, while curtain after curtain of silver mist rolls up before you, and island after island rises phantom-like from the shimmering surface of the lagoon, is an experience never to be forgotten. With the eastern heaven brightening behind you and daylight mounting slowly to the zenith above your head, your boat steals onward. One by one the little outlying islands, with their clustered buildings, which have sprung up before and around you, are passed and left behind. The long grey cloud-like line of the Lido

takes form and substance and solidifies into a narrow strip of land. Its guardian fort of San Niccolo frowns nearer and nearer until it, too, is passed and falls, shadowy once more, into the rear; and full before you lies the broad embouchure of the Canal of St. Mark, flanked by the great tongue-shaped mass of the Giudecca, with that most characteristic of Venetian "bits," the much portrayed Church of San Giorgio Maggiore, uplifting its noble cupola from the island that bears its name. A little further yet, and your steamer is alongside the maritime Dogana, and you yourself in full view, under broad daylight, of a scene without an equal in the world. To your left lies the Grand Canal, winding among its palaces into the heart of the city; to the right stretches the Riva degli Schiavoni, winding southward as it goes; and straight ahead of you lies the famous Piazza, with the splendours of the Ducal Palace at its side, and the grandly simple Campanile soaring skyward in the rear.

Now is the time, after "drinking delight of battle" with the Italian Customs, to exchange the deck of your steamer for the cushioned seat of a gondola, and while the morning is yet young and your senses at their keenest, to be slowly propelled through the snake-like convolutions of the Grand Canal. Discriminating with all the magnanimity at your command between "structure" and "function," admire as best you can the seventeenth century graces of the Custom House. Endeavour to judge the architect fairly, and to separate the artistic design of his work from the administrative purpose to which it has been applied. After all, he could not have foreseen the present condition of Italian finance. It will not detain you long in any case, nor spoil you for the splendid array of edifices, Renaissance, Romanesque, Byzantine, Italian Gothic, which line that wonderful two miles of water-way that serpentine from the Punta della Salute to the railway station. Every kind of architectural beauty, from the most voluptuous to the most stately, every form of appeal that the art of the builder can make to the æsthetic sense, in material or modelling, in gleaming marble or glowing pigment, in sumptuous richness of detail or in grandeur of scale and dignity of outline, is to be met with in that "crowded hour of glorious life" that may thus be spent in the company of a gondolier who is more than half a guide. Nothing is wanting to its full enjoyment except a more than human power of receptivity, and senses proof against the intoxication of so deep a draught of the beautiful, of so wild a revel in the delights of form and colour. It will be a "strong head" that keeps its balance, and a memory not easily bewildered that carries away with it much more than a few such isolated recollections as that of the majestic Vendramin-Calergi or the gem-like façade of the Cà d'Oro. The Cathedral, the Campanile, the Ducal Palace can all be viewed with more leisure, and under a less copious and discomposing torrent of impressions. And here, too, the overtaxed sight-seer can always find rest and repose in the Piazza itself, which, centre though it is of the busiest life of Venice, the heart from which radiates all its intricate arterial network of canals, is yet pervaded by a curious atmosphere of old-world tranquility which its flocks of fluttering pigeons seem rather to deepen than to disturb.

To the real lover of Venice, however, it is perhaps not by its "beauties," conventionally so styled, by its "show" buildings and famous points of view, that the

city is most endeared. These, it is true, are not of the kind which grow stale by familiarity. Many or most of them belong to the immortal category of those things that are "a joy for ever." But Venice depends not upon them for its peculiar charm; and even if its Cathedral and its Piazza, its "gorgeous palaces and solemn temples," were to fade like the "unsubstantial pageant" under the wand of Prospero, it would still, for the artist by profession or predilection, be a city to live and die in. Nowhere out of the East, and perhaps in no Eastern city save Cairo, can the artistic eye luxuriate in such a wealth of colour. Less gorgeous, less heavy, less fiercely brilliant than the hues of Oriental life, it is not less delightfully daring in combinations and contrasts; and they lurk in as unsuspected hiding-places, and leap as often from ambush upon us with the same shock of delightful surprise. The fish market under the shadow of the Rialto is a perfect parterre, without a blossom out of place. A group of flower-girls on a flight of canal steps strikes a chord of colour whose harmony is as perfect as its scheme is bold. To know a city, as to know a man, it is not enough to meet him only on state occasions, and never to see him save when attired in official robes. You must have followed him into the intimacies of his home, and have seen him in the dress and amid the surroundings of domestic life. Broad thoroughfares and spacious piazzas, cathedrals and palaces and public monuments are the official robes and insignia of a city; its underlying individuality is only revealed to you among the homes of its common people. It is in those narrow alleys which beckon you so invitingly from the blinding glare of the Grand Canal to their clean-cut slices of cool shadow that you must seek the truth and ensue it; and the illustrators of the sumptuous work, a translation of which I am introducing to the English public, have not neglected this means of penetrating to the inner life of Venice. Between its richly but chastely decorative covers, themselves a reproduction of fifteenth century Venetian work, the reader will find abundant proof that these native artists, from whose original sketches, and in no single instance from a photograph, the illustrations are taken, have studied their beloved city under all its aspects and in all its moods.

H. D. TRAILL.

NOTE

Owing to serious illness I was unable to complete the translation of this book, but the proofs have all passed through my hands.

NANCY BELL.

SOUTHEOURNE-ON-SEA,
December, 1894.



THE BUCINO DI SAN MARCO.

Hail, Venezia! We greet thee!

"'Tis an enchanted city! but like an idol, dead!"

A witty spirit has called Venice a fortunate survival of the Flood and he was not very far wrong, for to those who know her well there really is something of the Noah's ark about her, City of Refuge as she is from the miseries of life.

To realize this fact, we must from the first imbue ourselves with the spirit of ancient Venezia. We prefer to call her—interesting unfading beauty that she is—by her feminine Italian name rather than by that of her railway station, for the old title puts us at once more thoroughly *en rapport* with her.

The peculiarity which sets Venezia, the syren *par excellence*, apart from every other town is brought home to the new-comer the moment he sets foot upon the broad well-paved marble quay, where he has but to go down a few steps to reach the gondola awaiting him.

In depicting Venezia, the pencil, if wielded, as it is in the present case, by a competent hand, is more efficient than the pen. It suggests, indeed, much which it refrains from actually depicting, and the imagination of the spectator must supply the subtle atmospheric effects which form so appropriate a setting to the richly decorated Bride of the Adriatic. The unruffled azure of the sky and the blue-green water may alike be taken for granted, together with the sunbeams, which seem constrained for every fresh comer to add new lustre to the quivering golden reflections flung back from the marble beneath the arches of every bridge; a transient effect which the people of Venice, with their poetic instinct, call "*La vecchia fa la calza*," which may be translated, "the old city is on her mettle."

We are entering a City of Silence, at least, so we have been told by the various guides whom we have consulted, and we ourselves are in a most solemnly earnest mood; that is to say, as far as we can be whilst still hampered by enquiries about our luggage; those tiresome questions which mar the finest impressions by the intrusion of disillusioning prose.



A POLICEMAN.

It is in moments such as these that we are seized with a wild desire to be, if but for five minutes, a reigning prince, who, escorted by his well-trained major-domo, need never cast his eyes down upon the worries of every-day life, but is free to look straight out upon the scenes before him.

A really clever fellow once evaded this drawback by making a double arrival, coming first laden with his baggage, that curse of the traveller, and the second time making an unencumbered entry just to look about him and enjoy himself. He declared that on the second occasion he felt exactly like a winged seraph.

Our ears, prepared for silence, were greeted by a perfect hubbub of voices from a crowd of men disputing vigorously amongst themselves, the subject of the quarrel being apparently ourselves and a few other travellers. "Gondola, Signor!" "Commanda la gondola!" "A due Remi!" "Ecco pronta!" "Facchino, Signor!" "Facchino, Signor!" "Facchino!" in *crescendo* tones changing rapidly to *prestissimo*: "Hôtel Italie!" "Hôtel Europe!" "Britannia!" "Ci-devant New York!" "Luna!" "Quà Signor, pronto!" "Resta servito."

Commercial zeal inflates the lungs like bellows; and the result is good of its kind, though not exactly what we have been led to expect.

But there stands the guardian of the peace, ever ready to take the part of the foreigner, should his ignorance of the language or his dismay at the onslaught made upon him seem to call for interference.



ARRIVAL AT THE STATION.

The noise unexpectedly ceases. It was but a transient blaze as from burning straw after all. And suddenly there seems to be no need for haste. The true character of the town begins to make itself felt. Venezia and hurry are altogether hostile to each other, a fact which it is well to bear in mind from the first.

Shall we take a gondola? If we are alone we may well be content with the tastily decorated "barca," which represents, but is vastly superior to, the hotel omnibus of other cities; or, if we like, we can go quickly and cheaply by the "tram," as the smart canal steam-launch is called. Only somehow we don't like.

Venezia has already begun to put forth her fascinations, and we long to be alone with her, and to enjoy undisturbed the charms which have already filled our imagination for so long. We enter a gondola, and make our way backwards to our place under the black cabin. Why do we do this? Because we have heard that all true Venetians enter gondolas in that way, and just for a few minutes we should like to keep up an illusion that we belong to their number. But we do not fancy this *felze*, as the black awning is called, and we have it taken down.

We are now seated in a gondola, a true and unmistakable gondola. All the gondola songs we have ever heard are floating in our brain at once, that by Mendelssohn uppermost.

None, none of them are really the thing. We will compose one ourselves which shall render the gondola spirit in quite another fashion. The spell of Venezia is beginning to work. Our nerves are lulled by the sweet silence, broken only by the harmonious splash of the oar as it cleaves the water. We think, and yet we do not think, it is all just as we pictured it. We yield ourselves fully

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to the impressions made on us ; we want no guide, no helper now ; the hour of our friend in red* is not yet come, though doubtless it will ere long.

Hark ! a song ! From whence does it come ? Apparently from a young fellow with an untrained voice. But for all that what a charm there is in the softly modulated, we might almost say the many-hued, tones, about which there is a something of the flute-like character peculiar to the singers of the South. Let him sing to whom the gift of song is given ! we whisper, and rouse ourselves to listen to the words :

Tu sei Ninfa,
Sei fata,
Tu sei — tu sei un canto
perduto per me !

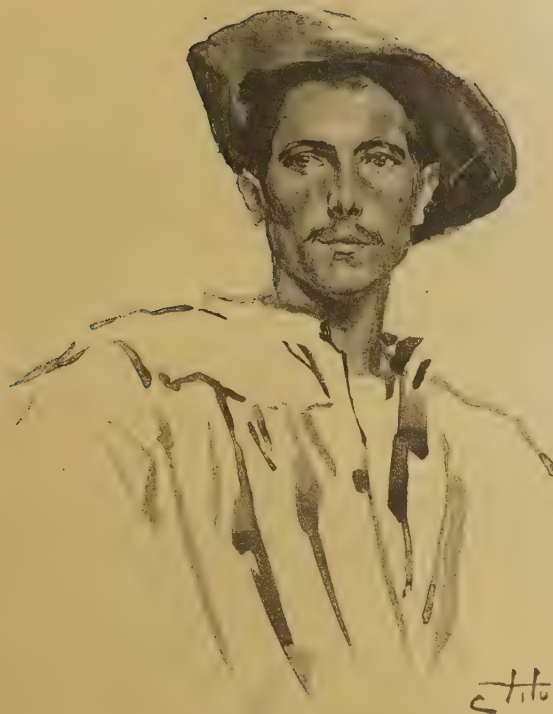
Thou art my nymph,
Thou art my fairy,
Thou art — thou art
a lost song to me !

The singer now comes in sight : a slim upright young fellow, with dark down on his upper lip, standing on the stern of his gondola, as he lets the oar glide with rhythmical motion through the water.

“Blessed be the city where such entertainments as this are still given gratis !” is our mental comment.

Bædecker.





A YOUNG GONDOLIER.

In a Gondola.

"Oh! Gondola, lithe and slender, my glance upon thee falls;
And the graceful form of the palm leaf the sight of thee recalls."

In Venice the word gondola is perpetually in everybody's mouth, and the long, graceful, aristocratic-looking craft itself is ever in evidence, so that it is very desirable that we should make quite sure of the exact etymological meaning of the oft-recurrent word.

According to some, "gondola" comes from the Latin *cymbula*, which is generally understood to mean a skiff, or any small boat. In course of time *cymbula* was converted in the Venetian dialect into *gundula*, and in MSS. into the more Italian-like *gondola*. The truth probably is, however, that the name *gondola* is the Greek for *conchigalia*, or sea-shell, meaning also mussel. Indeed, in the Neapolitan dialect, which has certain affinities with the Greek language, every mussel is still called a *vongola*. The Venetians might very well have had this *vongola* in their minds when they gave the name of gondola to the first boat they built, and out of which time and changing circumstances have evolved the typical craft of the present day, with its length of over thirty feet.

A trip in a gondola is amongst the most thoroughly delightful and unspoiled of pleasures; but to appreciate it thoroughly it is necessary to become accustomed to its peculiar conditions, to throw off all sense of being an alien, to become thoroughly in touch with the spirit of the syren of the water; in a word, to dream, in a land of dreams, where everything seems more or less ethereal.

"There is nothing easier than that!" is the reply of the uninitiated. But at first it really is by no means so simple a matter. The nerves are still too thoroughly unstrung from the effects of the noise and confusion of the crowded inland towns left behind to be able at once to attain that condition of utterly receptive calm, essential to the appreciation of a long trip in a gondola, whether on a mild spring day, or on one of those lovely long-drawn-out summer evenings, the beauty of which defies all description. The eyes wander from one thing to another, and as a result the general effect is lost or spoilt.

To enjoy Venice properly at first, all observation of details must be avoided; mind and spirit must be alike strung up to the highest pitch of ethereality, for it is with a syren that we have to do, and that assertion is no



LLOYD'S STEAMSHIP "TRIESTE."

mere empty phrase! The true artist alone is already imbued with this subtle, this indefinable quality, and that is why he finds himself from the first so thoroughly *en rapport* with the very essence of the mysterious loveliness around him; a loveliness which every æsthetic spirit advises us to judge of as a whole. But then, again, how can this be done where all the arts claim our attention at once? Where memory calls up such thrilling scenes of the past, where the politics of the moment are of such absorbing interest, and where every detail of the daily life of the people, from the most important to the most trivial, excels in interest anything we have ever seen elsewhere?

It is all very fine for the learned and experienced to preach that we are to dream only and not to look about us. But until habit has a little dulled our wonder over the complex beauties of the island world about us, we cannot do as we are bid.

Venice has been likened by certain scientific experts to a living organism with the innate faculty of self-renewal, and this seems to us no inapt comparison,



TWILIGHT ON THE GRAND CANAL.

for she undoubtedly has the power of maintaining her spell in absence and compelling all who have learnt to know her well to long to return to her.

In the book called "Rembrandt als Erzieher" (Rembrandt as a Teacher), so well known to all scholars, Venice is spoken of as a right noble city, and it must be remembered that in mediæval times noble signified something like the modern word ideal.

And to quote from another original source confirming the view of Venice as a city of refuge against all human ills, take Albert Dürer's remark: "Here I am a nobleman, at home a sycophant!" significant words implying that a man in ideal surroundings breathes more freely and feels his whole nature raised.

Greatly is he to be envied who arrives at Venice, whether by day or by night, for the first time; that is to say, if it does not rain, for rain, alas! is as fatal to the beauty of Venice as to that of any other city. Unfortunately a man can know first love but once, and in like manner he can only once enjoy the indescribable delight of the first view of this city of pre-eminent charm. The romance attaching to the unknown dies of course directly the idea of Venice ceases to be an abstract one.

Many fastidious travellers make a point of arriving at Venice at night, and as this fancy is compatible with taking the most direct railway route, there is nothing to be said against it. To secure a real, true, undisturbed greeting is of course a delight inferior to none, and there is something, against which even the most thorough-going rationalist is not altogether proof, very spiritual and ethereal about the City of the Lagoons at night, even if there is no moon, though that old flatterer does no mere courtier's service to his beloved Venezia.*

The Grand Canal at night has often been very justly likened to the gloomy Styx, and even in daylight there is a something resembling the uncanny ferryman Charon about the general appearance of the happy-hearted gondolier. When the green or red *Fanale*, as the little lamp of the gondola is called, is lit, as it always is at dusk, the resemblance is complete. The splash of the oar, and the hoarse, long-drawn-out cry of *stai là*, when the entrance to a canal is approached, adding to the ghost-like effect of the scene.

The celebrated Grand Canal, or water Corso of Venice, more often called the Canalazzo, the course of which, as is well known, forms the letter S, and is more than two miles long, is one huge monument, for from out of its silent waters rise up some six hundred large and small buildings, the imposing rows of windows of which are hidden at night behind the massive *scuri*, or outside shutters, literally "darkness makers," converting the houses they belong to into the semblance of a great mausoleum.

There is quite a fearsome charm in a night trip on the Canalazzo, when but few other craft are about, and those few glide, black and silent, along the imposing waterway, and past the weird fantastic-looking forms lining its banks: a charm which appeals to all alike, whether lovers with hand clasped in hand, old travellers *blasé* with many experiences, or eager inquisitive neophytes with all their lives before them.

It is easy to understand why Lord Byron, who knew and loved Venice so well, chose to haunt the Canalazzo at night, and steal from it the tragic colouring of his "Prisoner of Chillon" and "Don Juan," even as King Louis II. of Bavaria, the monarch of such lofty aspirations, preferred to wander in the forests of his native land with no light but that of torches. In Lord Byron's brief life Venice had an important part to play. He lived there for three whole years, and it is probable that the two poems mentioned above owe much of their deep melancholy to the City of the Lagoons where they were produced.

We mention this with a view to adding that Venice has the peculiarity, shared by hardly any other town, of taking the imagination by storm first; the heart following where the fancy leads when, the black mask disguising the city of many memories removed, we catch our first glimpse of the wealth of light-hearted, innocent gaiety so long concealed.

The old, and those who love sunshine, preferring to see everything as clearly as possible, will of course avoid a night arrival, and the best thing for them will be to come by the express train, or to take the new well-appointed Lloyd's steamship *Trieste*, which now brings passengers in a day from the town after which it is named, to Venice. To start in the golden sunshine of early morning from

* The moon is masculine in German.—*Trs.*



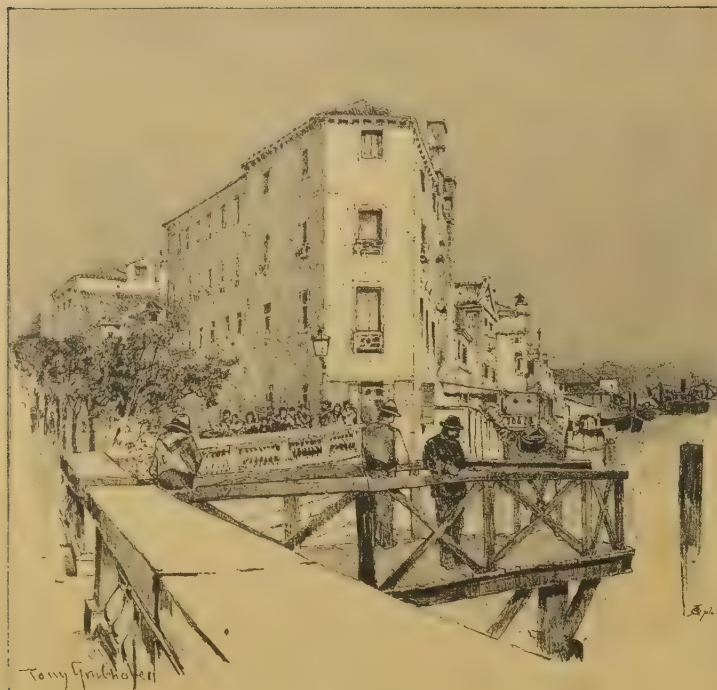
A FERRY STATION OR TRAGHETTO.

the Molo San Carlo in Trieste, and to land six hours later on the Piazzetta, the most beautiful spot in Venice, is indeed an easy and delightful trip.

But we have been wandering long enough from one subject to another before we have so much as set foot in our home that is to be, or shaken the dust of travel from our weary feet. Venice is a very entrancing subject, and like that of love is simply inexhaustible. And yet there are people enough who, after a flying visit to the Piazza and Church of San Marco, a trip along the Grand Canal in a gondola, a rush through the Accademia delle Belle Arti, and one or two passages in a ferry-boat, will joyfully exclaim: "We've done Venice thoroughly in four hours; there is really nothing more of any importance to see!" Then they will go on their way from that Venice which we are told by those best able to judge contains, in spite of its very restricted extent, treasures which cannot be adequately examined in less than a year, a fact which gives considerable food for reflection.

According to a recent report, to turn to something practical, Venice contains fifteen thousand houses, not any two of them alike. In old guide-books the number is put down at twenty-eight thousand, but this over-estimate was the result of the fact that many of the houses have two, sometimes three, entrances, each bearing its own number. There are also in Venice twelve hundred Calli, Fondamenta, Sottoportici, and blind alleys, all accessible to foot passengers; four hundred and fifty Ponti, or small bridges; one hundred and seventy lateral canals, with seventy-one islands connected with each other by the small bridges just mentioned; two main arteries for the river traffic: the Grand Canal, the length of which has already been given, and the width of which varies from about one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty feet; and the Canal della Giudecca, opening into the former and of equal length with it, connecting the main city with the outlying islands.

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ENTRANCE OF THE VIA GARIBALDI.

The handsome new street running along the whole of the back of the town and known as the Via Vittorio Emanuele, in which we almost forget that we are in Venice; the southern-looking esplanade called the Via Garibaldi; the beautiful and extensive Zattere quay, flanking the Giudecca; and lastly the charming promenade of the Riva degli Schiavoni, leading to the Giardini Pubblici, which can be seen in the distance, afford plenty of space for exercise in the city supposed to own not a place except the Piazza San Marco where her inhabitants can use their legs, and which Mark Twain dubbed "a town for cripples!"

In addition to all this Venice also owns twenty-five islands in her immediate neighbourhood, all of the greatest interest, not only on account of their position, but because of the treasures they contain and the historical memories connected with them.

Venice is the Mecca of the Art world. A goal of pilgrimage to travellers of every nationality. Fortunately for her, however, her priceless jewels have not yet been brought into such close contact with their admirers as has the much-kissed Black Stone of the Kaaba, so that they still retain uninjured their original value.



PALAZZO DANIELI ON THE RIVA DEGLI SCHIAVONI.

On Foreign Soil.

"Our vision here, without a question,
Is based upon our own digestion!"

Some travellers have been known to complain: Italy would be such a lovely place—a very Hesperides—if we were not so sure to get dyspepsia soon after our arrival! But rarely does anyone add: which we generally bring on ourselves for want of attention to a few simple rules.

The fact that our enjoyment of a trip depends first and foremost on our keeping well is an axiom none would think of denying; but opinion is very much divided as to the best way of retaining our health under new climatic conditions, and with a diet totally unlike that we have been accustomed to. For all that, the truth is really known to every schoolboy, though scarcely any grown-up men or women act upon it. Never are people more neglectful of precautions against illness than when they are roused and excited as they naturally are to some extent on every journey.

The accusation that Italian cooking is bad for the digestion of foreign visitors is very unjust—as unjust indeed as is the dread generally entertained of a Venetian summer; the truth being that Venice is not only in her fullest beauty in the summer, but more healthy than at any other time.

On the slightest indisposition the traveller cries: "It must be the climate; it's no fault of mine. Venice alone is guilty!" We have heard this said so often

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that in the interests of truth we feel bound to contradict it. Every journey, short or long, has, as everybody knows, a disturbing effect upon the constitution. The change of scene and climate, the upsetting of all the daily habits of life, of course, affect a considerable change, first manifested in increased nervous sensibility and receptivity, which at first only gives to everything an additional charm. So you may often hear some tourist say: "Though I did not close an eye during the journey last night, I feel fresher than ever this morning." Rest—not a bit of it; we can sleep at home!

There is a notion that every moment must be turned to account on a journey. But, whatever may be the case elsewhere, that is altogether a wrong idea in connection with Venezia, where the first impressions made on nearly every one is of that *dolce far niente* of which she is the very incarnation.

Just by way of justifying our little warning we had, perhaps, better let a tourist speak for himself, or rather quote an actual conversation between two visitors to Venice.

"Well, here we are; we've spruced ourselves up a bit, and had a glass of beer in that home-like little beer-garden round the corner. Why, this is the tasty No. 22 Mark Street, so it is, *ventidue Marzo*, sacred to the memory of the entry of the Italian troops into Venice and named after it; so it must be quite near the piazza of Saint Mark. That's very handy!

"And this is the Chiésa San Moisé. Oh, yes, I remember that interesting barocco-building quite well, the very



SELLER OF SWEETMEATS.

finest specimen of the barocco style ever produced, and embellished further by the exquisite colouring which time has added to its façade. (Remains standing opposite the church absorbed in admiration.) That grey under the white makes it look as if the stone fruit were just getting ripe, which is so good for the eyes, especially in summer, like a bit of ice on the tongue!"

"Good heavens! How thirsty looking at it makes me! It's like a railway journey in hot weather. Let's make haste and get some beer. (Goes back to the Birreria Bauer Grünwald and hastily empties a couple of *calici*.) Ah, that's done me good! And now we must be quick, there's no time to lose."

"Ah, you're an old stager, I see! Have you seen much of Europe? I'm very glad of it. I've done a lot of trotting about in Italy myself, and there's



THE CHURCH OF SAN MOISE.

always first-rate beer to be had. Long life to Grambinus! Shall we have another glass fresh from the tap? No! well perhaps you are right. Let us go on, to the Piazza San Marco, of course!" (Exit.)

"There now, we're in the right place. Oh, the noble piazza! The delightful harmony of line, the Church with its mosaics on their golden ground, our old friend the Campanile, how refreshing it is to see it all again. A regular bath for the spirit is this Venice. I've always said it was. And there, too, is the friendly caramelli man (seller of sweetmeats), the delight of the children still. How they do gather round him to be sure! Why, if it isn't the very same fellow from whom I used to buy bonbons for Lena years ago. But a truce with old memories!"

I thought I'd like just to see whether I was mistaken or not; but everything here changes so little, and that is what is so charming.

They laugh and nod their heads, and as for me, talk I must, when my heart is as full with all this beauty as it is just now! Hallo, there, my good old friend—how is a man to tear himself away in the very face of caramelli? Now just look at those children—sucking their fingers—it makes one quite young again oneself to see it. Ten sorts, almond, plum, date, orange, nut—there, that will do. What even crystallised grapes, too, at this time of year? Well, wherever did you get those from?—do pray help yourself.



Café Florian on the Piazza San Marco.

These grapes are quite delicious, but that good man still owes me an explanation of how he came by grapes in June. Yes, just two morsels more and that's all. And now, what's to pay for all this treat?

Sixty centisimi!

Sixty! How do you make that out? Oh, all right—I see. Five twelves are sixty. Not even three kreuzers or forty-eight pence! Capital. And now let us sit down. No, not at Florian's, the sun is much too hot on that side. We shall do better at the café opposite—Quadri's, if I'm not mistaken. There is shade there, and we can enjoy the whole Piazza, *con amore*—and here, by the way, we learn to construe *con amore* and *dolce far niente* properly. It is pleasant to sit down a bit, is it not? and, as we rest, our wonder and delight are ever on the increase (looking in his guide book and reading aloud): “In the Procuratie Nuove just about where the Café Florian now stands, rose the church of San Gemiano——” Noticing that his companion is gazing in wrapt admiration at St. Mark's, and is not listening, he adds in a lower voice: “Why, good heavens! Napoleon had that church destroyed!”

“Napoleon the First?” inquired the other, interrupting this soliloquy.

“Oh, of course; when we say Napoleon, we mean the first. He had the piazza widened, and the church pulled down. (Reads :) It was a small building, and only three of the present arcades belonged to it—just there where the seats of the Café Florian are now placed.” That is well worth knowing, and happened in 1810.

Napoleon is also responsible for that terribly hackneyed saying, “The Piazza of S. Marco is the finest ballroom in the world, and only the blue sky is worthy to cover it.” But in French everything sounds prettier than in any other language.

“Here, garçon, what can one have?—Properly speaking, one should not cry garçon, but bottega. There is no personality here. One addresses oneself to the whole ‘shop.’ Which with us is altogether another thing!”



A FLOWER-GIRL.

"Bottega, then, what can we have?—'Granita.'—Good, and what may that be? (Just look at that Carabineer.) Oh, I know now, oranges, sugar, and ice, not a bad mixture by any means! So bring us granita."

"It is delicious sitting here. To-day I shall merely enjoy these marvellous buildings as a whole, like a child who, the evening before its birthday, takes a peep at its presents through the pink tissue wrappings. You may laugh! I am a genuine enthusiast about Venice, I am, and frankly admit it, and—so are you as far as that goes—only every one has his own special freaks of madness. Yawning! No. I assure you I'm not tired, not at all; only just a little elevated, but granita is very refreshing" (taking another spoonful).

"Yes, you are right, it is the drink for a hot climate."

Look now, there's a flower-girl, and such a pretty one, with a charming figure to boot—so supple, no tight-lacing there. These Venetians are very graceful, only it is a pity they have abandoned their black cloaks. Years ago, I assure you, these girls always reminded me of Leonora in the "Troubador," searching for her husband in the dungeons.

How few people there are here now. Past five, I declare (looking at his watch). Heavens—how the time flies! I must get back to the hotel, for unfortunately I have let myself in for *table d'hôte*. I— Have you, too? But there is still an hour and a half before then.

"Here, waiter, bring the bill. How long does it take to go from here to the Lido and back without stopping anywhere, just merely for the sake of the trip? What! Hardly forty minutes there and back? Then one could be back here in an hour? Yes? Comfortably? That is delightful. Will you be one of the party?"

"I shall like it much."

"Well, then, let us be quick going these few steps down to the Riva degli Schiavoni (reading his guide book as he goes). See, 'the whole length of the quay, was once barred with chains in order that the slaves, from whom it takes its name, might be prevented from getting into the City if they stole away from the ships at night.' In fact a kind of barricade. Exactly! I read this not long ago in some history. Alas, how much there is still to learn about this most wonderful old city!"

"Look there—see that equestrian statue of Victor Emmanuel—Ferrari's, I think, is it not?"

"Yes, quite right, Ferrari's. One of the first sculptors of modern Italy."

"It is a grand conception and a splendid monument. Now for our tickets—quick!"



A CARABINEER.



THE PALAZZI RESSONICO, GIUSTIANI, AND FOSCARI.

The Golden Leaves are rustling.

"Hearken to the whispering water,
Endless shadows heaving still."

"History is, after all, the source of all the good and evil of the present!" says Seume in the Preface to his "Trip to Syracuse," a book too little read though it ranks amongst the classics. There is not the slightest doubt that, to quote Seume himself in confirmation of his own assertion, "places, people, names, and the circumstances of the time should always be taken into account in judging of deeds." It is, indeed, not merely desirable, but absolutely necessary, that they should be borne in mind. Where is the good, for instance, of going along the Grand Canal, and passing all the magnificent memorials of past centuries, if we are unable to call up again the glory which once surrounded these time-worn—nobly time-worn, but still time-worn—stones?

The dramatic author knows full well, when he places a new play before the public, that he must first imbue himself with the very spirit of his theme. The traveller, it is true, has no one but himself to consider, and it is entirely in his own interests that we insist on his placing himself in touch with the changed scenes around him. Any one not an artist coming direct from some big town to Venice, can only appreciate the latter properly when he looks at the present and

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past together. In Venice, no mere coquetting with a cheaply acquired smattering, no blue-stocking learning will pass muster; the real thing is a necessity, not a luxury.

He who would understand the rarely endowed personality of Venice must pore over the golden leaves of her deeply interesting and instructive life-story. He has but to touch that book ever so lightly, and the leaves will rustle and give forth a voice, a voice with the ring of true metal; gold, pure gold, unadulterated, indestructible, entrancing! And how easy to understand are the whispered words which seem to arise from the mysterious depths of the water along which we glide entranced. In surroundings such as these, such words are intelligible to the simplest—at least, to all who care to listen to them.

The history of Venice! Who does not know it? Is it not current coin even in our earliest school-days? Can we not relate its chief incidents, and quote the watchwords inseparable from them, in our very sleep? So much the better! We will recall that history as the gondola bears us on towards the Piazza di San Marco, and if there are any gaps in our knowledge—for it may perchance have grown rusty with time—the mysterious many-hued water will, we doubt not, whisper the missing links.

A tract of water of indefinite extent, which in course of time came to be called by geographers the *sette mari*, or seven lakes, separated itself from its mother the Adriatic, and its surface became dotted with numerous strips of land called *lidi*, several miles apart from each other, to which fled the oppressed inhabitants of the budding towns of Grado and Aquileia, when, in the fifteenth century, that scourge of God Attila fell upon Venice with his barbarian hosts. None but the bravest, strongest, healthiest and most cunning were able to survive under the terrible conditions of the island life. Necessity taught them to build for themselves shelters of materials such as birds use for their nests, and now and then the sea, in merciful mood, supplied them with a little fish. As time went on and the first terror subsided, a few hardy spirits ventured forth in rough home-made boats to the distant shores of the mainland, there to collect food for themselves and fodder for their cattle.

In the ceaseless struggle for bare existence each generation of the exiles became more hardened, intelligent and experienced. Now and then efforts were even made to connect the various islands into one community, and rumour began to be busy over the accounts brought by sailors of the little settlement, the story of which was at first supposed to be a mere myth.

Gradually the primitive colony, in which there were no leaders but those naturally set apart by age and experience, no masters and no servants, grew in strength and numbers, till the day came when it occurred to one of its members to make the *high beach* the central nucleus of the settlement, and to name the rest of the islands after it. This high beach, the *rivo-alto* or the Rialto, may thus be called the foundation stone of what was afterwards to become the City of Venice. On the spot whence now springs the noble single arch of the Ponte di Rialto, spanning the Canalazzo, the now mighty town may be said to have first seen the light, as the simple high beach of one of the islands which now make up so important a whole. From this point it was that she set forth on the path which was to lead her to so glorious a future.



THE RIALTO BRIDGE.

A noble, sturdy race of men, strong alike in body and in mind, faithful in love and courageous in war, sprang from the islanders who had sustained so long and unceasing a struggle with the elements. The sea, to which their forefathers had fled in the time of their sorest need, lavished on them, so soon as they had attained the mastery over her, her choicest treasures. By their own strenuous exertions the islanders in many cases compelled the very waters to withdraw and dry land to appear where previously ebb and flood had had it all their own way, and in the soil thus won from the waves flourished every variety of fruit. Everything grew and prospered; in the luxuriant meadows grazed flocks of fat sheep, whilst side by side with them frolicked numbers of vigorous young colts. The sea too yielded a plentiful harvest of choice food. Flocks of sea-birds swept across the island settlements, giving life to the canals by which those islands were separated. Plentiful rain in the autumn and spring provided springs of fresh water to drink. Wooden foot planks connected one island with another: Rivo Alto with Dorsoduro or with Spina-lunga, as they were called in the early days of the union which was later to form so highly-cultured a community.

Arcadia was once more reproduced; the grandchildren inherited what the stubborn perseverance of their forefathers had wrested from the wilderness.

But, as Adam and Eve found out long ago in Paradise, such a state of things could not last long for a fallible human race; and, although the frugal and self-denying islanders were not yet driven by stern necessity to seek their food afar, the innate thirst for adventure led them to venture ever further and further from home upon the wind-swept, tempest-tossed ocean.

A State was, in fact, to grow out of this little handful of fishermen and sailors, bound together by insoluble ties: a State, the senate of which—senate means

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simply the elders—though it held its first sittings in a vegetable garden on the shore of an arm of a lagoon, cutting across what was one day to become the finest of all fine sites—the Piazza di San Marco—nevertheless yet held within it the germ of the wisdom and foresight characteristic many centuries later of that far-famed Council of Ten, which, meeting in the richly-decorated and marvellously-painted halls of the Palace of the Doges, dictated its will to the world, and even dared to defy the power of the Popes.

It was in the thirteenth century that the prosperity of Venice became assured. The fall of Constantinople was synchronous with the beginning of her glory. Already, in the twelfth century, the merchants of the Rivo-alto, the name of which had long before been changed to Venice, held in one hand an open purse and in the other a sword. Venice took part in the sieges of Caifa and Escalon, and the blood of the Saracens flowed in streams. The winged lion, which was the proud symbol of the City of the Lagoons, hovered above Jerusalem and Jaffa in its hurried flight to the aid of the Crusaders, adding fresh lustre to the standard it adorned.

The Church of San Marco, the primitive wooden nucleus of which dated from the second half of the eighth century, owes its magnificent decorations, which include some hundred antique green and blue columns of jasper and porphyry, to the conquests made at this period.

As soon as the news of the fall of Byzantium was received, 500 sailing vessels manned by 4000 men, under the leadership of Enrico Dandolo, then in his ninety-third year, set forth from the Lagoons. The ancient city of Constantinople was sacked, and many of the choicest treasures of antiquity were wantonly destroyed, whilst those which appeared to be of the greatest value were carried away.

Amongst the latter relics was a phial containing some of the blood of the Redeemer. Two soldiers, it is said, fought together for the honour of bringing this priceless treasure to the Church of San Marco. The winner, who placed this chief of all treasures beneath the shelter of the wings of the Lion of Ezekiel, bought the gift from God with the blood of his comrade.

The old Greeks had accumulated countless treasures in Byzantium, and these now fell into the hands of the Venetians. Santa Sophia was destroyed, and her marbles were piled up on shipboard to be transported to distant Venice for the enrichment of St. Mark's. The bronze gates, with the mosaics, jewels, etc., of the mosque, which had become a Christian Church, must go too. The sailors of the republican galleys tore the four bronze horses from the Circus of Byzantium and dragged them to their ships. Every time the Venetian fleet returned home it came laden with fresh spoil wrested from distant lands, the last refuges of antique culture.

The gold of the mosaics in the Basilica aurea is from Smyrna, the lions placed at first in front of the Arsenal witnessed the Battle of Marathon, and have looked down for some 2,400 years upon the changing vicissitudes of human life.

More and more triumphant grew the people, bolder and more ambitious became their leaders. So it went on for centuries. The church could already hardly hold the treasures which were laid at the feet of the patron San Marco. It became necessary to enlarge the sacred building. The chapel of Saint Isodoro

was added, and columns, such as those near the entrance to the Doge's Palace, with nothing to support, were set up. *Patere*, sacrificial or libation bowls, and Assyrian and Persian bas-reliefs representing horrible heathen allegories, such as the triumphant Ceres on the lateral wall of St. Mark's abutting on the Piazzetta dei Leoncini, were placed in Christian churches and on the façades of palaces belonging to strictly orthodox Catholics, apparently only in order that the spectator should turn away his eyes from beholding them.

In the fifteenth century, however, this inflow of treasures gradually ceased. Venice remained rich, powerful, more and more eager for glory and enterprise, but her ambitions took another form. She created for herself an art peculiarly her own, which is in the truest sense still an exponent of the passionate, the proud, the strong and wealthy Venezia.

The evolution of an art of a nature so original was, of course, the work of artists who thrived apace upon a soil congenial to them, and took the world by storm. Imbued with the keenest sense of the beautiful, and endowed with rare force, skill, and wealth of expression, a group of architects and painters arose of such overmastering capacity as had never been seen in a single State since the decline of Greek culture.

In 1591, during the reign of Doge Cicogna, the architect Antonio da Ponte built the present Rialto bridge, replacing, as shown in a picture by Carpaccio, dated 1488, now in the Accademia della Belle Arti, the single wooden arch, 83 feet long by 60 feet broad, which connected the principal islands of Venice.

Of Da Ponte's work Sansovino writes: "The building of this stone bridge was completed within two years, and cost two hundred and fifty thousand gold sequins." * Twelve thousand piles, each consisting of an elm trunk ten feet long, formed the foundations. The undertaking appeared so gigantic to the people of the time that it was the constant butt of their wit. When at last it was finished and opened to the public, all eager to rush across it, it was discovered that, in a certain corner of the fine structure, the tables had been turned upon the scurrilous mockers by the slandered workmen in a very ingenious fashion. We will add no more on the subject, except that "he who seeks shall find."

Whilst fairy-like palaces in stone were rising up by the side of the water, under the direction of architects such as Sansovino, Bon, Sammichele, Longhena, and the Lombardo family—of whom Pietro was the most distinguished member—and who amongst them worked out what may be characterized as the unique style, in which were blended the peculiarities of Arabic, Gothic, Ionic and Byzantine architecture; Gian Bellino, Bassano, Carpaccio, Palma, and later Titian, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, Giorgione, Gentile Bellini, and Schiavoni were equally successful in painting. The Venetians got their feeling for colour from the East, and their taste for mosaics especially from Santa Sophia, in Byzantium.

Moreover, workers in glass, as skilful as those of ancient Phœnicia, established foundries at Murano, where were produced the true Venetian mosaics, which are full of Byzantine feeling and differ entirely from those of Florence or of Rome. As the background of their mosaic pictures the Venetians used gold, the pure fine

* The sequin was of the same value (about 9s. 4d.) as the ducat, which replaced it.—*Trs.*

gold brought in such quantities from the Orient, and which they had seen turned to the same account in ancient Moorish mosaics.

In accordance with an edict of the Senate, the domes and minor ornaments of the Church of St. Mark were also to glow with the purest gold, and although the order was never fully carried out, Gentile Bellini in all good faith in his picture of San Marco took it for granted that it would be.

The Doge Leonardo Loredan thought it better to use the gold, which was to have been spread over the dome of St. Mark's, to wrest Otranto, Trani, and Monopoli from the King of Aragon. This filching of treasure from the church passed almost unnoticed, however, for in spite of it the wealth of the Basilica increased year by year, for whoever amassed wealth by lucky speculations, pillage, or inheritance—and fortunes appear to have changed hands very often in those days—was compelled by the Serenissima to give a good slice to the Tesoro di San Marco.

The richly endowed building dedicated to God and to St. Mark was fortunate, too, in other ways, for even a spoiler such as Napoleon paused at its portal and contented himself with seizing the reins of the four bronze horses above it and dragging them with him to Paris, where he had them placed as decorations in the Place du Carrousel. Not until after the meeting of the allies, in 1815, were they restored to their old position, where they are as ever wonderfully effective.

In this nineteenth century the incident which must now be referred to strikes like a discordant note upon the ear. No, it was not whispered to us by the Canalazzo—it was not murmured by the golden leaves of the golden book; but it is a fact that the populace of Venice, excited by the report of the bloody scenes being enacted in France in the time of the great Revolution, actually burnt on the Piazza San Marco what they thought to be the original *libro d'oro*, but which was fortunately only a copy, for the real book is still in existence. The mention of the *libro d'oro* recalls to our memory a less well-known episode of the past history of Venice.

That golden book, the official record of the Venetian nobility, contains many an important revelation. The nobles of Venice disdained titles, and the various barons, counts, and margraves in the City of the Lagoons all came originally from the mainland.

The name of a patrician race was also its title, and compared with the families whose chief distinction was that name, every other stock must be characterised as new. Thus the house of Venier probably sprang from the Valerian of Roman history; that of the Giustiani from the Emperor Justinian; the Querini, Cornaro, or Corner—all one family—from the Cornelii of Rome; and the Marcello from the Consul Marcellus.

We are not able to decide from the materials at our disposal whether all the refugees from Aquileia—where the Romans founded a Latin colony of 15,000 families, to which were given extensive tracts of land and very great power—fled to Venice at once, or whether it was not until the time of the first Crusades that most of them placed themselves under Venetian protection. However that may be, we know that the Venetians, with the wisdom which characterised them from the first, encouraged all pilgrims from distant countries to flock into their city, and to make it the starting-point for the Holy Land. Venice



CHIEF ENTRANCE OF
SAN MARCO.

not only owned the safest ships, she also extended her protection to all pilgrims, however humble they might be, and distinguished them in various ways. All money, of whatever stamp, was readily changed into the coinage current in the East, and stately church ceremonials were held in honour of the Crusaders, in which they were treated by the populace not merely as *uomini santi*, but as actual saints. The Doge himself set the best example possible by walking side by side with the pilgrims in his State robes.

The unlimited power of the Doges lasted until the thirteenth century, but from that time it gradually decreased, till at last the Dux or leader was but the mouthpiece of the Council of Ten, which formed a bulwark against the encroachments of the Doges, and in its turn, in course of time, required itself to be held in check. Then arose the far-famed and dreaded State Inquisition, from which the Doge—we have the authority of Marino Faliero and Francesco Foscari for this assertion—was as little safe as were the humblest of those under the protection of the winged lion. The Inquisitors were but three in number, and made up the oft-quoted "Council of Three."

It is worthy of remark that from the twelfth century it was very rare indeed for a married Doge to be elected unless he were a widower. There was a strong prejudice against the foundation of an hereditary dynasty, and the influence of women in State affairs was especially dreaded. For this reason old unmarried men were chosen as a rule. The political acumen of the Venetians led them to do their utmost to keep women out of the arena of public life, although in every other respect they were treated with the greatest consideration, equal citizen rights being accorded to boys and girls alike from the age of twelve.

The fact that the highest dignities of the State were likely to be bestowed on unmarried men only, led to the custom of allowing none but the younger members of a family to enter the state of wedlock. One of the results of this was that a very great many daughters of patrician houses never found suitable mates, and took refuge in the convents, of which there was an excessive number at that time.

But let us leave the arid region of Venetian politics, and turn for a moment to feast our eyes on the glory which radiated forth from the Serenissima at the zenith of his power. We glean our information from the "*Archivio di Stato*," and it may, therefore, be looked upon as official.

The accounts of the display in gondolas, liveries and costumes, but above all at table, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Venice, read to us of the present day like fairy tales.

A feast was given on the Giudecca—where the patrician families of Venice had their palatial summer residences—by Maria Grimani, patriarch of Aquileja, in honour of one of the Farnese from Rome, a nephew of the Pope.³ Golden galleys manned by nobles in magnificent costumes—representing those of sailors and Turks—floated hard by; these sham mariners delighting with their wit the crowds of spectators decked out in the elaborate toilettes of the time (1514), with which, thanks to the great painters of the day, we are all thoroughly familiar, and who had flocked to the canal to look on at the festivities in their gondolas adorned with gold and draped with costly silk curtains. The number of State gondolas which took part on this occasion is estimated, by the trustworthy historian Sansedoni of Siena, at no less than three thousand. Only imagine what the spectacle must have been!

Two hundred guests were invited to table, and in a wonderful marble hall they were served with ninety courses in dishes of gold. The guests were arrayed in costumes gleaming with gold brocade, and decked with the most costly hand-made point-lace and sparkling jewels. Some of the women wore turquoises as big as pigeons' eggs, the turquoise being their favourite jewel on account of the magic powers attributed to it.

Slaves with silver jugs and richly-chased ewers went round after dinner was over, offering costly scented essences from the East for the guests to wash their hands in; the Venetians, ever since they had come into intimate relations with the Orient, having had a special predilection for beautiful perfumes.

Asiatic luxury became more and more the fashion in Venice, but in everything connected with the table they followed the Romans rather than the Orientals. Lucullus himself would not have been above relishing the choice dishes which figured on their tables, including game brought from such distant localities as the forests of Treviso, which in those days extended as far as Mestre, and fish such as is now only found in very small quantities in the Adriatic, with immense numbers of oysters of abnormal size, which rich and poor were free to enjoy, so to speak, for nothing.

But these refined and sensitive Venetians were not content with faring sumptuously. All that met their eyes during their meals must minister to their enjoyment, and their sense of the æsthetic was as keen as their palate. Hence arose the custom amongst the wealthy of spreading three or four of the finest woven



THE CHURCH OF THE REDENTORE ON THE GIUDECCA.

table-cloths one above the other with a delicately-worked cover of stag's skin between each. In the long-drawn-out entertainments, when such an immense number of courses were served, one of these beautiful embroidered or blazoned cloths was laid bare after the other, the most costly being reserved to the last.

In the year 1446, the celebrated Florentine, Lucca della Robbia, whose finest work is the famous frieze of the Ospedale del Ceppo in the mediæval Tuscan town of Pistoja, made enamelled terra-cotta ware the fashion amongst the wealthy Venetians.

Wonderful majolica dishes, regular works of art in colour and design, now alternated with those of gold and silver which had previously been exclusively used at the tables of the great. On these were served game pies, with crust moulded into the shape of the lion of St. Mark; pheasants standing erect, with all their plumage still on; all manner of salads, built up with slices of lemon into the form of some fabulous animal. An altogether exaggerated value was placed on such arrangements by these spoiled children of fortune. Cooks, too, were artists in their way, and were held in high esteem. Wild boars, grouse, partridges, peacocks, and venison, now known to the Venetian only through pictures, were in olden times never wanting on the tables of well-to-do people.

The Cucina Veneziani, or Venetian cookery, said by some to have been at one time the best in the world, may perhaps have had one fault, and that was the too free use of spices. Possibly the costly condiments brought from the East by conquerors or merchants suited the palate better than they did the digestion. In any case, it certainly was the Venetians who introduced the taste for spices to the rest of Europe.

At the time of which we are writing the merchants of the City of the Lagoons inaugurated a new branch of the export trade which has since attained

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to remarkable proportions. From the Venetian dependencies in Ionia such immense quantities of lemons were sent over that their recipients were quite at a loss what to do with them. The transport occupied so long a time that the idea of sending away the fruit itself had to be abandoned, and therefore the juice was all squeezed out of the lemons on the spot and made into a kind of wine, which could be bottled, and in that form introduced to countries where such a thing as a lemon had seldom, if ever, been seen.

How wealthy the middle classes of Venice became through their skill in trade and in art is proved by the official reports of the Senate to the Serenissima preserved in the Archivio di Stato.

In even unpretending burgher households an entertainment would not seldom cost as much as four or five hundred golden ducats.

According to the account of the eye-witness, Antonio Groppo, feasts were held in which the different sweetmeats served reached the amazing total of twelve hundred and sixty, whilst three hundred different sorts of bonbons were given to the ladies present as souvenirs. This fashion of making gifts after an entertainment was universal, and added, of course, very greatly to the expense. True, this sweetmeat orgie quoted by Groppo was part of a specially brilliant *fête*, but still it may be taken as a typical instance of the kind of thing in vogue. It was, in fact, the collation in the Golden Hall of the Council of Ten in the Doge's Palace, given in honour of Henry III. of France, and it seems to have astonished that monarch, who had then just been proclaimed King of Poland. The Serenissima never lost an opportunity of enforcing upon foreigners and notabilities the superiority of their city in every respect, and this was how it was that the Venetian love of display was noised abroad throughout the world.

As will be readily understood, in a society so refined and so luxurious as that of Venice the female courtesan became a power, a fact the young and handsome King of France, son of Catherine de Medici, learnt to his cost when he lost his heart to the dazzlingly lovely Veronica Franco, who excelled all other women of her class in her beauty and accomplishments.

Whilst virtuous women were compelled to restrict their sphere of usefulness to their home circle, and only appeared in public at the great church festivals, and the yearly "Listoni," or public processions to San Marco, San Stefano and San Polo, spending the rest of their time in gliding about in their private gondolas, or shut up in apartments jealously closed to the outer world; the courtesan, as in the time of Perikles, appeared at the feasts of the wealthy and powerful, carrying all before them not only by their beauty, but by their skill in music and in song and by that nameless fascination which was their traditional heritage. It was the fashion to take a mistress, and to lavish on her every conceivable luxury. The Palazzini, or smaller palaces, of which many are still well hidden in the labyrinth of streets far away from the Grand Canal, might have much to reveal on that subject!

The wives of those in high office were often less wealthy than the courtesans, and it is worthy of note that even the Serenissima himself extended his protection to the wanton beauties, especially to those who were clever and skilful in intrigue—nay, more than that, he sometimes took them into his own service.



THE RIO AND PALAZZO BIANCA CAPPELO.

The fair young creatures with painted cheeks were, in fact, allowed to be present at all public ceremonials, and no pageant was considered quite complete unless they added their mite to its attractions.

The pampered Phrynes—many of whom were Greeks—must float about on the Grand Canal in gilded, richly decorated gondolas, but they had to submit to one stigma. Even in broad daylight, a red light, visible a long distance off, shed from a beautifully ornamented lamp, must distinguish the barks of these

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sirens of damaged reputation, so that even when quite far off no one could mistake them for the gondolas of honest women.

According to Montaigne, there were at one time in Venice as many as one hundred and fifty courtesans spending princely incomes. The cosy little suppers in the remote palazzini, where, as a matter of course, gambling for high stakes also went on, had results so far-reaching that the Senate found itself compelled to interfere if it did not wish its best citizens to go to rack and ruin; and the prevalent prodigality was to a certain extent checked by various restrictions placed upon luxury, and by severe punishments inflicted on those who infringed the new enactments.

As early as 1450, the Serenissima thought it desirable to issue a decree forbidding any citizen to spend more on his frequent entertainments than half a gold ducat per head. Of course, however, as long as the purse was full, and money, or its equivalent, was not the only currency amongst the middle classes of Venice, it was easy enough to evade this edict. But the wise Senate lost no time in raising its powerful voice against lavish expenditure, and, as more than one chronicler tells us, such a shower of decrees was poured out that every luxury came under one impost or another!

Fashion changed rapidly at Venice, and every innovation led to fresh display. The heels of ladies' shoes were a foot and a half high (as you may see from those in the Museo Civico); and of course these dames of gigantic stature required an immense quantity of stuff in their dresses, to which moreover they had long trains. Against the latter the Camolduli monk, Fra Mauro, lifted up his voice from the pulpit in 1461, when Moro was Doge. "*Sapine mulieres,*" he said, "*tam longas caudas in vestimentis habeant, et per terram trahant, quæ res diabolica est.*" But in spite of all their religious zeal, the splendour-loving Venetians were not to be moved by the words of the holy man, and continued to drag their trains, several yards long—works of the devil though they were—over the mosaic floors of their palaces and the marble pavement of their noble piazzas, thereby delighting the eyes of all true artists.

Brides must really have resembled goddesses in that time of magnificence. They wore their carefully tended hair flowing loosely behind them, that all might admire the length of this their most beautiful ornament. Threads of gold as long as the hair hung down with it, and on the head rested a crown of jewels, whilst the shoulders were left bare. One half of the robe was made of silk damask, the other of gold brocade. Widows, however, who took a second husband had to wear black dresses and veils, and were married at midnight.

Everything was sacrificed to effect, and from the cradle to the grave life was one long pompous pageant.

Gradually the dainty little cap with its trimming of pearls, with which Gian Bellini has made us familiar in his charming picture of Laura, and the modest white veil of Chinese silk worn by unmarried girls were given up, their place being taken by quantities of curly hair, which did not always grow upon the head it adorned.

The trade in hair was carried on by the country people, who brought quantities of beautiful tresses into the town, and exposed them for sale, hanging



THE PALAZZO CIGOGNA.

from poles set up in the Piazza San Marco, on the day of the Fiere, or great yearly market.

Sansovino describes the fine linen in use amongst Venetian ladies, and looks upon it as an indication not only of the purity of their souls, but also of the refinement of their taste. Even for under-linen and bed-clothes preference was given to materials interwoven with silver, such as are still dear to Eastern nations; and to pillow-made point lace, the original purpose of which appears to have been the adornment of altar-cloths and surplices.

Love of cleanliness is yet another proof of refinement, and in their baths the Venetians used musk, ambergris, myrrh, the leaves of the cedar tree and peppermint.

It gradually became the fashion amongst ladies to wear low-necked dresses, and the charms, once so carefully hidden, were now exposed to view even in daylight, at entertainments, in church, and out of doors. Rouge and white paint were lavishly employed.

Ladies of rank wore a wide garment known as the *dogalina* and made of carmine-coloured silk or velvet, trimmed with fur or point-lace. Gold brocade was extensively used for gala attire, and, though the material was quite soft, the under-linen was literally woven of gold and silver thread.

The costliness of the ornaments indulged in by women called forth a fresh interdict, and as early as 1274 Pope Gregory X. forbid the wearing of jewels in public; but a little later we find Christina Corner pleading for permission to resume certain favourite decorations, especially the much-loved pearls. Five patrician ladies of the highest rank were her spokeswomen with the Pope, and the old state of things was soon restored—that is to say, extravagance became greater than ever!

Even after death the lavish expenditure indulged in while living was carried on by the survivors, and many a funeral ceremony cost as much as a wedding would have done. Princely guests flocked from all quarters of the globe to witness the world-famous magnificence displayed on every possible occasion in this unique city, and described themselves as perfectly dazzled by the brilliancy of the entertainments at which they were present.

It was, however, on the water that the Queen of the Adriatic appeared at her best. Venezia owned some thirty thousand gondolas, of which at least one-third vied with each other in the splendour of their decorations. The Serenissima, whom nothing escaped, saw to what all this would lead, and determined to arrest the ruin of many a princely house by some restrictive measure.

It was not long before he hit upon a happy expedient, which dealt a death-blow to display upon the water. Gondolas were henceforth to have black awnings and curtains only, which at once put a stop to the rivalry in costly silk and gilded draperies, carvings, and mirrors. It was not until this doom went forth that the gondola, with its gloomy black coverings, became the mysterious bark fit for all manner of intrigue, with which history has made us so familiar. Henceforth it lent itself readily to the service alike of the conspirator against the State and of the lover engaged in some amorous intrigue. It became the craft sacred to hatred as well as to love, and was more than once the scene of some cowardly assassination.

The Crusades made Tasso's *Gerusalemme deliberata* popular in Venice, and the immortal poem was translated, by an unknown hand, into the dialect of the people. The Grand Canal now resounded, on summer nights, with the beautiful songs of the great poet of the sixteenth century, set to what is known as the *barcarolle*,* a simple melody evolved by the singers themselves, and which the gondoliers of Venice have made peculiarly their own.

Long afterwards, Tomaso Mondini presented the City of the Lagoons with a written translation into the Venetian dialect of Tasso's masterpiece, of which Jean Jacques Rousseau, who had access to the original MS. during his stay in Venice, made a copy, together with one of the melody and words then familiar to every gondolier.

In the fourteenth century brilliant tournaments were held on the Piazza San Marco, which shook beneath the tramp of the richly-caparisoned steeds of the combatants. In the fifteenth century these entertainments on land were succeeded by pompous festivities on the water; whilst in the sixteenth, Spanish influence having come into play, the most popular ceremonials were the miracle plays held in the golden basilica, supplemented by *tableaux vivants*, representing scenes from the Old Testament, in which every detail, however small, was rendered with the utmost fidelity. These sacred spectacles were inaugurated by processions of from seven to eight hundred monks and from two to three hundred priests, the latter in their most costly robes, that is to say in silken garments stiff with gold.

Sansovino describes these wonderful processions in the tenth book of his *Venetia citta nobilissima et singolare*. But these theatrical church ceremonies,

* Literally, "boat-song."—*Trs.*



which ill-suited the clear-headed sensible Venetians, who were always in favour of freedom of thought, were rather political than religious, and were organized by the crafty Serenissima with a view to impressing Philip II. of Spain, even before he became aware of the hostile intentions of that monarch.

The Republic made a very great point of the physical training of the young men of the city, and the trials of skill on the canal, later called regattas, were organized entirely for the sake of promoting a healthy spirit of rivalry amongst them. The rich and great soon turned to account these public exhibitions of

muscular strength by getting the order forbidding the decoration of their gondolas rescinded for one day in the year at least, and on that one day the water was crowded by tastily-gilded fairy-like crafts, to which the Venetians gave the name of "bissone," decked out with all manner of silken draperies. Though the splendour is not now so great, a similar scene is still presented on regatta days in Venice. The word "regatta" was originally "rigata," which means literally a stripe, streak, or line.

Athletic games, borrowed from those of Greece, were also organized by the Serenissima, regular competitions, in which the Niccolini and Castellani were pitted against each other in a rivalry, still to some extent maintained even at the present day. Recognizable from a considerable distance by their red caps, they met on the Ponte dei Pugni, near San Barnaba, or at some other spot agreed upon, and vied with each other in the feats of strength and skill they performed, calling themselves by such fancy titles as "the human pyramid," "the duck," "the three bridges," "the imperial throne," "fair Venezia," or "the four saints on the cross." As a matter of course, these matches received official sanction, and were witnessed by the *élite* and the whole populace of Venice.*

In the seventeenth century began a general decline in the prosperity and ambition of the Venetians, as well as in their love for the beautiful and great and their zeal for the good of the community to which they belonged. Their delight in display, however, remained unabated, but that display was wanting in dignity and had about it something of the baroque style, which, with its undue use of incongruous ornamentation, exercised so great an influence on art of every kind.

No longer content with one dining-hall, meals were served in suites of three in palaces and country houses. Number one was sacred to the first course, number two to the joints, and number three to a magnificent dessert.

When, thanks to the potent Greek wines consumed—which the Venetians ranked next to malmsey—merriment was at its height, costly majolica ware from Vicenza and Bassano, with delicate glass drinking vessels and table ornaments from Murano, were often recklessly flung out into the waters below, which, with a quiet scorn of human audacity and imbecility, silently bore their booty to the immutable ocean.

With the opening of the eighteenth century the decadence had set in yet more decidedly, and wealth had been squandered in a succession of wild undertakings and mad revelries. Many young girls were banished to convents, with a kind of idea that the piety of daughters and of sisters would atone to the Divine Judge of Heaven for the iniquities of their fathers and brothers.

But like springs from like, and even in the cloister there was a certain resemblance to the manners of the outside world, for often in that *Refugium peccatorum* does the cloak of religion shroud a sprightly spirit: "The merriest feasts were held in the cloisters of the nuns," said a contemporary chronicler. Until the middle of the eighteenth century the reception-rooms of the nuns were, indeed, the *rendezvous* of all the *élite* of the city.

The middle classes alone escaped complete immersion in the whirlpool of extravagance and riot. Gold no longer floated about, so to speak, upon the canals

* Representations of these games are still to be seen in various pictures preserved in Venice.

of Venice, but it could still be honestly earned by those who were anxious to lead a respectable life.

To atone for the decline of the nobility, with their unbridled license, there now rose up an as yet small, but strong, industrious, and honourable middle class in Venice. Venezia, more captivating than ever because her sorrows had set their seal upon her fair and piquant features, began to regain something of her former splendour. Painters, alike of figure or of still life subjects, flocked from every nook and corner of the civilized globe, irresistibly drawn to the Syren, even as their predecessors had been to her sister Lutetia. Poetry and dramatic art achieved triumphs hitherto unknown in this city, so recently at the very zenith of her power; and Venetian patricians, the sons of conquerors who had been dreaded throughout the world, found their highest interest behind the scenes of the theatre of their native town.



It was the fashion to go to Brenta or to the marches of Treviso in the autumn, where the nobles had fine country houses, and led very much the same kind of useless existence as they did in Venice.

The Venetians either got up at noon or held levées in their sleeping apartments. The bed-clothes were trimmed with point-lace, and the couches were placed in alcoves adorned with painted Cupids. The one aim of men and women alike appears to have been to pass the time somehow without any serious occupation till the dinner-hour, or that for going to the theatre, arrived. This was the less difficult as the toilette of either sex took some three or four hours. Whilst at the toilette table it was the custom to have some favourite poet of the day—generally an Abbate—read aloud. The rôle of the Cicisbeo—who figured in every household, and the recognition of whom at the side of the wife was set down in black and white in every marriage contract—did not begin till the lady left her house for the gondola, to go to display her charms on the Piazza San Marco or at the theatre.

It must not, however, be supposed that this Cicisbeo was anything more than a useless idler, whose business it was to attend the lady to whom he had given his allegiance, to wait upon her, kiss her hand, and to address all manner of unmeaning compliments to her, perhaps even now and then to be summoned to the toilette table to give his opinion upon a costume, when he would occasionally be allowed to impress a kiss upon her alabaster shoulders. These were all the privileges accorded to the Cicisbeo in the marriage contract. If the beautiful lady he served sometimes cherished in her heart a warmer feeling for him than that of a friend, it was her business only, and had nothing whatever to do with the manners and customs of the day.

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Moreover, the truth-loving writers of the period under review assure us that such a thing as a grand passion for anyone was totally unknown at that time. Men made love and paid court to women, but they really no longer knew what true love was. The puppet-like daily life encouraged gallantry and shallow sentiment, exercising the brain only, but never the heart, which, under such conditions, became more and more contracted and insensible.

Singers and dancers, especially the latter, exercised the greatest influence over the *nobili*, young and old. The descendants of men who had made for themselves glorious names in the history of their fatherland, no longer excelled in anything but trifling, playing cards and rowing.

After the fourteenth century the glory of the Republic began to decline, but her end, if inglorious, was by no means contemptible, for she died like some veteran who had tried all things and discovered their vanity.

Nearly all Italy succumbed before the power of Napoleon, but Venice never bent the knee to him. The republican feeling, the sense of the equality of all men, still remained unquenched in her sons even after the world-renowned Republic had practically ceased to exist. This independent spirit, which is still sustained in the people of the City of the Lagoons, was respected by the great conqueror, and is, perhaps, at the root of the charming manners which make all comers feel themselves to be amongst their equals upon Venezia's hospitable shores.





MONUMENT TO VITTORIO EMANUELE ON THE RIVA DEGLI SCHIAVONI.

An Excursion to the Lido.

"Oh, sandy dunes, oh, sunny shores !
Thy very breath is health !"

"There and back, including admission to the terrace and the tram-car, sixty centesimi. Very cheap !" (See advertisement posted up outside the ticket office.) "Steamers ply every twenty minutes from May till October, and in July, August, and September up till midnight."

"Grand idea this sudden excursion to the Lido! Only to sit and enjoy the fresh breeze off the water does one ever so much good ; not that I am in the least tired. What do you say?"

"Well, this circlet of islands round about Venice is indeed unique." (Takes his opera-glass.) "How these necks of land lift themselves one after another out of the water! Here we see the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, glowing in the rosy light, fortress and church in close juxtaposition—the world-famed convent which holds the holy relic of St. Stephen, brought by one of the Falieri from Constantinople, and which is the reason for the great annual midnight festival, which lasts from

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the 25th to the 26th of December. This spot was formerly known as the 'Island of Cypressess,' on account of its thick groves. In 1808 the monks were all expelled from here and deprived of free entry. It was only in 1829 that Venice obtained the full privileges of a free port."

"No, I don't find all this in my guide-book! For this knowledge I am indebted to the fountain-head; but now let me consult my red-bound friend again." (Reads:) "This church was begun in 1560 by Palladio, and completed in 1610 by Scamozzi, Palladio in the meantime having died. It contains very remarkable paintings by Tintoretto, and also the monument of the Doge Leonardo Dona and the famous Domenico Michieli. Michieli is the Godfrey of the Venetian Crusades; the hero, the conqueror of Jerusalem, Cyrus, Jaffa and Ascalon.— Ha, Ascalon! that reminds me of Scheffel's 'Schwarzer Walfisch zu Ascalon.'"—(Reads again.) "Yes, all very instructive and interesting, but far too much of it; the same history goes on still for another whole page." (He continues:) "From this island is fired a cannon, which can be heard in the heart of the city itself, at midday and at night, in winter at eight and in summer at nine o'clock. In the houses along the Riva one feels the detonation so strongly, that strangers, who are not prepared for it, imagine it to be an earthquake."

"Marvellous, the view of Venice from here! Over the wide expanse of water is seen the Bacino di San Marco. The same view, which, seen from a certain height, looks like an amphora, from which towards the slender neck gleams a bright green spot. That bit of emerald green in the bird's-eye view of Venice is the Public Garden. That large open park, with a view, which we cannot see from here, over the whole lagoon, but to which we are now going, is almost as easy to reach on foot as by gondola or steamer, which are both, by the way, awaiting us now at the foot of these wide white marble steps."



THE ISLAND OF SAN GIORGIO-MAGGIORE.



THE CHOIR OF THE CHURCH ON SAN GIORGIO.

"Behind the Public Garden, like a mole-hill in the distance—one can see it distinctly—lies the island of St. Helena. In the Middle Ages a hospice for pilgrims from all lands, a sort of City of Refuge for the sick, for, in point of humanity, Italy was then ahead of all other countries. The monks of the Mount of Olives had charge of this hospice. To-day there is a carriage factory there, and the new plantation around it, which will be a shady avenue presently, serves as a temporary riding ground, as you can see. Take the glass" (passing it to his companion). "So that, even in Venice, one is not debarred from the possibility of a ride."

"This Public Garden in midsummer (as when I was here last year) is brilliantly illuminated every evening up till midnight by electricity, and with its *banda cittadina* three times a week, its *café chantant*, its restaurant, and its drinking-hall, is a perfect oasis in Venice. And, again, it was Napoleon, reaper and sower in one, who, in 1807, hit upon this inexpressibly lovely spot and directed the planting of the trees."

(Looking in his book again :) "We are now floating past more islands—in olden times convents, now, that is to say since 1838, lunatic asylums. San Servolo receives the mentally afflicted men, while San Clemente (that building farther in the background, with the very unlovely façade like a barrack) takes in the women. Then here on our right, glowing with a rich Pompeian red, is the island of San Lazzaro, with its church and campanile, now the abode of the Mechitarists, and famous for the treasures concealed in the Armenian convent. A very interesting spot, which it would take a good two hours and a half to see properly."

"This island originally served as a refuge for those who returned from the far East afflicted with leprosy (hence its name), and who were kept here in quarantine until their recovery or death. Even when the scourge of leprosy began



THE CONVENT OF THE ARMENIAN MECHITARISTS ON THE ISLAND OF SAN LAZZARO.

to disappear, this island remained for a long time quite deserted, no one daring to set foot upon it, and only the glancing lizard would make a home upon this sunny spot. But when the Morea was torn from the Venetians, and the unfortunate Armenian priests were driven away from their ancestral home, the Republic promised them protection, and offered them this shunned but most lovely island. What they have made of it since 1715 we must not fail to notice."

"Did you know that Lord Byron spent some months in the convent here, far from the turmoil of the world? Yes, and perhaps it was here that the impulse first seized him, amongst the meek Fathers and wise Armenians, to undertake that unfortunate and fatal expedition to Missolonghi. Those gloomy trees, too, which you can see now we are drawing nearer, and which look not unlike the masts of some phantom ship, those black pillar-like cypresses were planted by his hand nearly eighty years ago."

"Is it indeed so long since the genial lord went there, thinking to do penance, instead of which he only studied Greek!"

"Well, so you think we have made good use of our time on this journey? I am glad of that. All the same, on our return we will interest ourselves more in what the moment has to offer and leave the past alone; only, as a matter of fact, that is by no means so easy in Venice."

"Ah, here we are at Sant' Elisabetta, or rather at San Nicolo del Lido. Just note how the green and thickly-wooded shore stretches away towards the Castello di Sant' Andrea del Lido, that famous fort which protects Venice on her ocean side. The last shot fired from here was in 1797, under the Republic, against the French under Langier, who strove to force their way in and compel the surrender of the fort."

"Il Lido, eccoci!"

"Here we are! and half an hour ago we were sitting at Quadri's and sipping *granita*. What varied impressions have been ours in this little space of



TRAMWAY ON THE LIDO.

time. Really we ought not to land on account of that *table d'hôte*! Never mind, we can soon settle that, and if we miss the first course it doesn't matter; we are here now, and have our tickets for the tram and the terrace. What do you think? Come along, then; let us land. Now here we are once more on *terra firma*, and the tram-car is close by. This little car is not at all bad for Venice. It can take us up: and I see there are all sorts of conveyances to be had" (stepping into the car).

"Three and a half minutes' drive through a double avenue of plane trees, ending in an acacia grove. On either side a sea of foliage, decked in early summer's tenderest green, while out of this leafy ocean rise slender soaring campaniles and the roofs of the neighbouring farms. The road on the right leads to the Quattro fontane, and on the left to Nicoletto. Ah, what a delicious smell there is here of sea and oysters! That's what I call a perfume! How the very smell of the place titillates my nose! Now, here we are! This little trip reminds me of the voyage round the world which one makes in a cosmorama!"



ON THE TERRACE OF THE LIDO.

"This Lido *établissement* seems to come out wonderfully in every respect. See, hotels, chalets to let, and beach-huts! Oh, nothing comes up to a beach-hut! A day in one of them, thatched with plaited reeds, and with nothing on but a bathing-suit—that brings one very near to nature! Into the water, and out again, then letting oneself dry in the warm southern sun. To lie on the sands, with a paper or a book, smoking a cigarette, then sleeping awhile, with now and again a little impromptu meal, thinking, dreaming, and then, when one begins to feel rather too warm, splash into the water once more. Oh, if one only had time for it, and it is all to be had here for next to nothing! It is a perfect Arcadia!"

"Fortunately the end of this description of such an innocent and harmless existence finds us at the large saloon which opens on to the terrace overlooking the sea. This saloon is some two hundred feet long and forty wide, and is most comfortably arranged. Easy chairs and sofas are placed along the walls, covered with that



SHELL-FISH SELLER ON THE LIDO.

cool material so serviceable in the south, and here and there are nooks from which invalids can overlook the sea, without suffering from any draught. An excellent orchestra performs here every afternoon, and it is a most comfortable resort for visitors and well adapted for the use of those who wish to while away a few hours of hot or stormy weather. In July, August, and September, this concert is given in the open air at the public baths, and is included in the subscription; and then there is also a very good theatrical performance given gratis in the evenings, at which one gets a capital view of the whole cosmopolitan company, for every nation takes an interest in the drama and opera."

"Now a fresh breeze floats in from the terrace, and the sea, so blue, so glorious, so perfect, lies before me! Only to see that life-breathing ocean is to yearn towards it with outstretched arms; that ocean which ever seems to evade with a shy aloofness the very rhapsodies which it calls forth from the heart of the poet!"

"What a gay crowd! What fashionable toilettes, and what lovely women! But could you only realise, you fascinating witches, how the sea, that most powerful of all syrens, diverts one's glance from you, you would long to go and blend yourselves with the flowing water, even as the Doge, when on Ascension Day he hurled the ring into its blue depths as an eternal pledge of the bond between him and the ocean, to which he owed so much."

"Here, a truce to these old fables!"

"Who dares say that to me? It may be an old fable, but it is always useful to have it in mind. And those rings—three hundred and thirty altogether, if I am not mistaken—what has become of them, I wonder? Ah, at the bottom



FISHING-BOATS ON THE LAGOON.

of the sea, together with the Spanish Armada and many other treasures! One, I know, was discovered in the body of a fish, and is to be seen this very day in the Museo Civico in Venice!"

"Look at those sails yonder, just where sky and sea seem to be melting into one! How they glisten in the evening light, like a flock of white gulls spreading their wings for a distant flight. Like gulls! What a very worn-out and hackneyed simile! That is the curse of these apt phrases which we inflict upon one another out of sheer laziness. Let us rather compare these snowy sails, as they slowly approach us, to a troop of Bedouins stealing gradually away, their white bernouses inflated by the hot breath of the simoon. And only see yonder, how the tawny sails of those fishing-boats from Chioggia flash blood-red in the sun! It almost seems as if Omnipotence were speaking to our

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inmost hearts from out the limitless ocean. Combativeness would seem to have remained in the Chioggian blood to this very day; it shows itself not only in the fierce colouring of their sails, but in the sharply-cut features of these most interesting island folk."

"We must spend a day at Chioggia! There will not be many people there now, in June—the season of course has hardly begun; but in July, August, and part of September, crowds of very elegant and fashionable people gather there from the Continent. Indeed, in olden days, the healing properties of the Adriatic were more highly esteemed than those of the Mediterranean or Ionian Seas; so much so, that Nero's baths were supplied from it. Probably he had the water conveyed in casks by boat to Rome, just as Francis I. took that from Schönbrunn with him to Fontainebleau in iron-bound vessels for his own personal use. Modern science too has a word to say in favour of this water. It contains a very great variety of sea-weeds—but this leads one into the region of medicine and chemistry, and is quite beyond the scope of our work.

"Heavens, how the time flies! How about that *table d'hôte*? We must hurry away; especially as our little trip to-day was not intended as a regular visit to the Lido, but only as a refreshing little excursion. We will certainly revisit this most charming shore, but at different hours of the day; for instance, the morning after the festival of the Redentore, when the Venetians, after a night spent in all kinds of festivities, go in their gondolas to see the sun rise on the sea; stroll through the old Jewish cemetery, close by, and wind up by seeing the 'Murazzi,' the iron-work so much admired by Goethe, and which is to be found opposite the lovely Sotto Marina, famous for its pumpkins and the breeding of pigs."

"We must order some trifle here—we have kept the servants waiting so long; but we must be quick. There is a *carte* hanging up yonder—all very clear and appropriate." (Reads:) "'Coffee, black, or with milk.' No, not before dinner; it spoils one's appetite. Ah, oysters! That's a good idea!" (Calls the waiter and orders oysters.) "They have none here, it seems, but he says there are men on the terrace there selling shell-fish; and having done our duty here, we can go." (They leave the *établissement*.) "Ah, yes, there are the 'Signori Pescatori' crying their wares."

"Cappe fresche! Cappe da Deo, fresche!"



A VIEW ON THE LIDO.

"No, no, we want oysters. What, the oyster season over? Well, then, give us some of those—but fresh, mind! What do you call them?"

"Cappe da Deo."

"Ah, Cappe da Deo, and finger mussels too, because they are as long as one's finger, I suppose. And these larger ones?"

"Cappe sante."

"Very good, we'll try both sorts. Charming—full of the sea; and what a delicious smell! It is to be hoped they won't ruin one's digestion!"

"Tutt' altro."

"Tutt' altro! One can guess that from the very look of the man; his digestion is strong enough!"

"Tutt' altro" (on the contrary), replied the fish-seller, and promptly thrust half-a-dozen into his large laughing mouth.

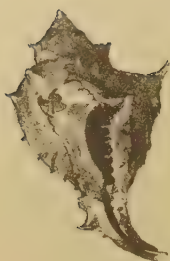
"How well these people seem," said the friend, "and look at their teeth! They know how to live much more rationally than we do!"

"Very true—I fully endorse that, for, in spite of your assertion, you have in the space of the last two hours eaten an excellent *déjeuner* at Treviso, and you were not hungry on the journey simply because you smoked too many cigarettes and drank beer, sipped *granita*, and crunched caramels in between, finishing up by sending all kinds of sea-monsters down your throat, and now you are hurrying back to a liberal *table d'hôte*, at five francs a head without wine! Certainly in this respect you cannot be said to resemble the people. You are hastening away from this heavenly atmosphere, and think about nothing in the world but your digestion!"

And now, returning more quickly than we came, and impelled by the soft evening breeze, we stand up, the better to enjoy the exquisite panorama spread out before us. It puts us into an ecstasy, and we long fervently for wings (those still uninvented blessings), to soar right away and float upon the blue ether.

It is indeed with infinite regret that we turn our backs upon the Lido, whence the best and most complete view of Venice as a whole is to be obtained. How unique and unrivalled is that Lido, with its fisher-folk in their quaint costumes and with their big nets and long-necked gourd water-bottles! How weird and fascinating are the reflections cast by them in the lagoons! How indescribable is alike the linear and aerial perspective of the view spread out on every side!

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But, turning our backs on queenly Venice, who is already beginning to lay aside her regal mantle of purple and gold, we let our gaze wander in the direction from which we are being borne away, and our eyes are satiated with the lovely tender tints of the fading June day, for in the distant west the sun is flinging a misty veil over the roseate casket of treasures, and blending into one the shadowy outlines of sky and sea.

Here a large vessel, an iron-clad frigate, which we pass by on our course, arouses us from our wistful musings.

"*Vettor Pisani*? No, no, it is the *Stromboli*, who shows us her teeth in the form of bristling guns. What a combination of skill, toil, perseverance and ingenuity are found in such a colossus as this, whose iron form defies wind, weather, and the attacks of foes upon the high seas, and only through some malicious fate, or mistaken word of command at a peaceful manœuvre, is suddenly plunged to the bottom of the sea as was the *Victoria*!—not to speak of the fifteen or thirty million francs invested in these floating fortresses by the naval powers of to-day."

"But however did we get round to this topic? Let us gladden our eyes instead with the sight of this gaily-decked vessel. How the different coloured flags flutter in the evening light! That is an English ship, the royal yacht *Surprise*. There's her name! Her arrival is notified in the '*Gazzetta di Venezia*.' And this one is an Austrian boat—the *Friedrich*, a training-ship—the home of all those spruce young men in short, close-fitting, blue cloth jackets, who probably at this moment are sauntering about Venice, flourishing their gloves in their hands and attracting the notice and admiration of the ladies. Who knows how many a Tegethoff may spring up from amongst all these gilded youths? It is pleasant too to watch the crew up in the rigging, enjoying the fresh evening breeze, or taking their siesta."

"No, no, that's an optical delusion; they are not on the *Friedrich*, but on the *Europa*, lying at anchor close by."

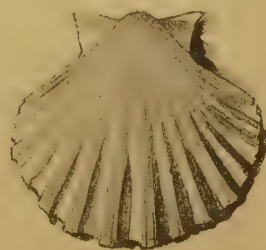
"What an animated scene this harbour presents in the summer sun!"

"And now, I think, we have seen about enough for one day, so let us hurry back to our respective hotels for *table d'hôte*."

"Shall I see you again this evening?"

"Well, yes, perhaps—later on."

"All right, then; come and meet me in the Giardinetto Reale on the Piazzetta. The band does not play in the Piazza di San Marco on Tuesdays!"





OPPOSITE THE GIARDINETTO ADJOINING THE PIAZZETTA.

In the Giardinetto Reale.

"We well know how to frame our life's endeavour,
And knowing, still live on the same as ever!"

It was already ten o'clock when we left the Hôtel de l'Europe and adjourned to the Giardinetto Reale. A small orchestra, with the addition of a piano, was playing as we entered, and seemed to act upon our nervous systems in more ways than one.

"What are those people playing? It is like some lullaby which I heard long ago. Ah, 'Norma!' It is very soothing—at least we find it so now; probably all these delicate *florituri* had a very different effect upon our ancestors."

"Now, I suppose, one must order something again; that's the worst of travelling!"

"Black coffee?"

"No, coffee, as strong as they drink it here, would keep me wide awake all night! Bring me an ice—that can't hurt." (To himself:) "Oh, if only I had not been in time for that lobster-mayonnaise at the hotel!"

"Having already eaten a great deal too many shell-fish on the Lido" (this remark is made by the newly-arrived friend from the Hôtel d'Italie).

"Hello—this is all very fine! Am I actually talking out loud?"

"You? Who? I made that remark."

"Well, I thought I heard someone say—'Having already eaten too many shell-fish on the Lido.'"



CAFÉ IN THE GIARDINETTO.

"I did say so, certainly, for I feel a very decided sense of oppression from having eaten so many of them, charming as they are to look at outside."

"What, you too!"

"Yes, yes; but say no more about it! How caressingly the wind floats in from the water. The whole scene from this rather higher point of view is like some fairyland." (They have gone upstairs to the gallery and are looking out over the water.)

"The smart people here don't seem to take much notice of all the beauty around them!"

"They are too well used to it! and, besides, they are listening with the greatest interest to that everlasting tune; and now, if you please, I declare they are encoring that 'Carnival of Venice,' and we shall have it all over again."

"Do look at this unique scene: on the right, the gigantic church of the Salute, a colossal edifice, which seems to soar up to heaven; and here, a long white tongue stretching far away on the lagoon, the Punta della Dogana, with the golden globe on which the winged Mercury is gaily dancing!"

"In the first place, he has no wings—he is only spreading a sail out to support him (symbolically) whilst he pirouettes over the sea; and secondly, it is no Mercury at all, but Fortuna!"

"See, there, on the other side gleams the snowy fabric of the 'Redentore,' Palladio's masterpiece, rising up from the gloom of a second lateral canal, which at this point joins the first. Note, too, the noiseless gliding gondolas, with their little luminous points of red and blue, like beacons (*fanali*). Oh, one has hardly eyes enough to see clearly all the details which stand out from the sombre background!"



THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE.

"That second artery yonder, with its many houses, is the 'Canal della Giudecca,' and this settlement, a city in itself almost, though topographically looked upon as Venice, is called the Giudecca. That row of houses which cuts right across the Lagoon was known in olden days as the 'Spina lunga,' because it stands out of the water like the vertebræ of some great fish. Or, according to some, 'Giudecca' means 'Judea,' because this settlement, which almost rivals Venice itself, was once a refuge for numbers of Jews; whilst others say it is so called from the Italian 'Giudicato,'* which in the Venetian dialect would be 'Zudega.' The Jews were condemned to confine themselves to this spot, and it is well

* Fish's backbone.

known that even in the legal publications issued under the Republic the Venetian acceptance of the word is retained, and the famous Correspondence of the Ambassadors, so carefully treasured among the archives of the city, was carried on in the Venetian dialect."

"More than one interesting romance has taken place in this Jewish quarter, where patrician sons have wooed pale Jewish maidens, with a dreamy glow in their almond-shaped, Oriental eyes."

"One of these romances is handed down to us by a modern Italian poet, Vittorio Salmini, who died in 1882, and who immortalised the story of an interesting Jewish maiden in a play called *Violante*."

"The Republic, very wisely, always affords protection to the Jews, and yet now and then, impelled by love or suffering, they rashly attempt to overstep the narrow limit set by their benefactors, and that of course ends in a struggle. The loftier of the houses in the Venetian Ghetto could give some interesting accounts of the relations between the Jews and the Republic."

It grows late. The Giardinetto is nearly empty, and our visitors are worn out and tired.

"What, midnight already!" both exclaim together, as the brazen tongue peals forth the hour with measured strokes from the tower of San Marco.

"What, again and again?"

"Yes, the bell sounds every quarter of an hour during the night, and seems to call back from the spirit world the great creators of the splendour around us, saying: 'Venice still lives, and the world still prostrates itself in wonder before her winged lion, in whose name so many great and beautiful works have been completed.' One more glance from the white marble-like steps, where 'on such a night as this,' to quote Shakespeare, George Sand used to lie and dream, her cigarette between her lips."

"George Sand! the emancipated! The philosophic spirit fettered in a woman's body! Pupil of Jean Jacques Rousseau, to whose humanitarian teaching she clung so firmly throughout her life, with but the one exception, that she did not content herself with published works only, as is proved by the volumes of her collected correspondence."

"George Sand was something more than a famous authoress—she was a great woman, especially when time had calmed the vehemence of her emotions and freed her nature from dross. Venice, whom she loved and where she lived for some time, holds her in affectionate remembrance, as she herself, in several letters, has testified."

And now to rest! The bells have ceased their chiming. The spirits have gone back to peace. Let us also repose. "The twilight falls! The world grows grey; the soft wind freshens; we, too, will away," as Wagner says in *Faust*. Capital advice, which we will follow at once.



The Piazza di San Marco.

"He who from Venice did her piazza wrest,
Would tear the very heart from out her breast."

It will be well to fix on some point from which to start on our wanderings through Venice, and we cannot do better than to choose the Riva degli Schiavoni, closely connected as it is with the Piazza di San Marco.

If the Piazza be, as it is said, the heart and lungs of Venice, the unique quay known as the Riva degli Schiavoni, with the far-stretching lagoon as its boundary, may be called her eyes, her light, her sunbeam.

Sorely are we tempted here to dwell upon the golden sunrises, the glowing, roseate hours of dawn, or upon the sultry, languishing summer nights when the Bacino di San Marco is all quivering with phosphorescent light; to speak of the pale ethereal days of winter, when Phœbus woos the yearning earth with but half a heart, or of the soft warm nights when the full moon floods the whole scene with light, when gondolas jostle each other upon canal and lagoon, when

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the air resounds with song and the notes of the guitar, and the happy spirit, drunk with the mere joy of living, cries, as he gazes round upon the entrancing beauty, "Fair, indeed, is the world, and fairer far is Venice than any other spot." And if, not content with the setting, we began to try to describe the life, the motion, the perpetual going to and fro from early morn to late evening, on this magnificent marble lounge, where should we end?

But there is no need for any attempt of the kind, for everyone can see all this for himself. Moreover, the Riva degli Schiavoni has nothing peculiarly characteristic of Venice, nothing particularly mysterious about it, and therefore the beauty apparent to the most careless observer needs no commentary. We will merely take a glance at the Moorish Gothic building of the Hôtel Royal Danieli, which we should think more of if it were not so very evidently a restoration. Originally the Palazzo Nani Mocenigo (Nani is a nickname for Giovanni) was one of the finest structures of the period to which it belongs, and from the windows of the first and second stories a grand view—quite unique of its kind, and one never to be forgotten—is obtained.

Rising up as it does from amongst the beautiful islands forming a kind of framework to it, the Church of S. Maria della Salute is a very noteworthy feature in the panorama. Beyond we see the Giudecca with its forest of masts gleaming yellow in the sunlight, whilst the background is formed by the Euganean hills in their drapery of mist. On the other side the view extends to the Giardini and, on very clear days, to the green shores of the Lido. Just opposite we have the Bacino di San Marco, with its large and small boats, and from the pavement beneath our windows we hear the animated voices of an excitable southern crowd.

A few steps from the Moorish Gothic palace is the world-famous Bridge of Sighs, with its ghastly memories of countless ghosts, spanning a gloomy and silent canal, which reflects with it the mighty granite structure of the Janus-faced Palace of the Doges, bearing on its brow the stamp of promised freedom from the trammels of all tradition, and on its back that of invincible might; a very colossus in stone; a granite fortress compelling admiration; the delight of every eye; the wonder of the connoisseur; the favourite of fortune, which has stood firm through all the vicissitudes of its various occupiers. In the Marciana, the celebrated Library of St. Mark's, with its wealth of manuscripts, the noble bequest of Petrarca of Arezzo, students may read of the varying fortunes of this mighty building, the renown of which will never die, so intimately is it bound up with its surroundings and with the past history of Venice.

But we are going along too fast, and to be consistent we must retrace our steps a little, and take up the thread of our discourse with the memories connected with the Hôtel Danieli, so justly called the Royal. To give but a list of the crowned heads, the grand dukes and grand duchesses who in the present century—so old already is the fame of this establishment—have spent some time in the Palazzo Nani Mocenigo, would be a mere waste of time; but we must just mention that eccentric personage, the remarkable Duke of Brunswick, known throughout Europe as "the brilliant Duke," who spent the winter there for many years. Nor has it been only the great in worldly rank who have shed the light



THE PONTE DEI SOSPIRI, OR BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

of their presence here; in the last decade the most brilliantly-gifted of the aristocracy of mind have chosen it as their retreat. Alfred Musset lived for months at Danieli's, and there wrote many of his immortal poems and struggled through a serious illness. Balzac completed here his "Romance of Gambara"; George Sand, then the intimate friend of Musset, wrote her celebrated work "Leone-Leoni" here. In the "Lettres d'un Voyageur," which made such a stir in the thirties when they appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, a good deal of space was devoted to "Albergo Danieli."

* * * * *

It is ten o'clock of a June morning, the Riva is already glowing in the sunshine, and we do not want to get into a great heat the first thing. We will, however, go back once more to that bridge of melancholy memories, the Ponte dei Sospiri, and to the Ponte della Paglia, or Bridge of Straw, so called because it was here that the boats laden with straw halted in the days when straw markets were held in Venice. Probably most of this straw found its way to the cellars hard by. It must not be forgotten that at one time Venice owned a great many fine horses, and that as late as the fifteenth century grand tournaments were held on the Piazza di San Marco.

We seek the shade of the imposing colonnade formed by the grand avenue of pillars on which rests the Ducal Palazzo. It is said that since their erection these columns have sunk fifteen inches deeper into the soil.

The Palace of the Doges was begun in 809, long before the golden age of Venice. The buildings were five times destroyed by fire, rising from the ashes each time in fresh glory. The Palazzo Ducale assumed its present form in the fourteenth century under the Doge Marino Faliero, and Filippo Calendario was the architect. Even in warm bright sunshine there is something awful and mysterious about it—something which rouses a feeling akin to fear in the human breast. We feel, in fact, much as we do when a great storm among the mountains thrills us in every nerve, when we reflect on the many contradictory uses to which this colossal block of buildings have been put in the course of centuries. Not only was it the Ducal Palazzo, the stronghold of the Doges and their families, to whom almost regal honours were accorded, it was also the Town Hall, the Court of Justice, the Senate, the Hall of Festivities, the Prison, and even the place of execution, for deep below it were the passages known as Pozzi, opening direct into the water, and which are, some of them, still to be seen.

The richly decorated façade of the Palace of the Doges belongs to the Venetian Gothic, or, as it is sometimes called, the pointed Arabic, style of architecture, which was to a very great extent the outcome of the Byzantine. This style was largely adopted in Venice at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries, and the case under notice illustrates well the surpassing skill with which the architects of the period varied what would otherwise have been the monotony of an absolutely flat front by rich and appropriate surface decoration. This façade, if studied in connection with that of San Marco, affords the student a complete epitome of the development of Gothic ornamental art, whilst the east front and interior of the same building are extremely fine examples of Renaissance

work. The double rows of arcades, with the pointed-headed windows piercing the flat marble facings above, are especially happy features. The staircases by Sansovino, leading to the apartments containing the fine collections of works by Venetian artists, are in themselves works of art.

Every one of the rooms in this grand and complex building has its own thrilling associations. In the Sala del Maggiore Consiglio, with its ceiling paintings by Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese and others, met the nobili for the councils; the Sala della Bussola was the ante-room of the chamber of the dreaded Triumvirate, and in the room to which it led many and many a terrible doom was pronounced. In the rooms under the leads, known as the Sotto della Bussola, lived and died many a political prisoner, and from the underground and under-water pozzi, already mentioned, many a hero went forth to meet his death.

But we have lingered too long over this deeply interesting relic of the past, and must tear ourselves away from its many memories, as we are anxious to get a general idea of the Piazza itself under its aspect of to-day.

We are now standing opposite the fine Porta della Carta, opposite the chief entrance to the inner court of the palace known as the Paper Gate, because on it were nailed the edicts and announcements of all kinds of the Serenissima.

At the same time we find ourselves on the Piazza itself, which we are to study under the varying aspects of different hours of the day—on the Piazza, with the encircling arcades, locally called the Procuratie,* in which shelter from the sun or the rain can always be obtained. As we have seen, the Piazza was cut across by a canal until the beginning of the twelfth century, from the banks of which rose the first Church of San Geminiano, and on the site of the Loggie of the Ducal Palazzo flourished a vegetable garden belonging to the nuns of San Zaccaria. At that remote period the Senate, which then only meant the elders, when Puritanical simplicity reigned amongst the island community, liked to retire there to meditate quietly on the State necessities of the rapidly growing state. In the twelfth century the canal was filled in and the church mentioned above pulled down, only for another to rise up, to which the same name was given, but which was destroyed by order of Napoleon in 1810. In 1260 the first block was laid of the Piazza di San Marco, after the designs of Andrea Tirali, and from the same time may be said to date its rise to the glorious position it was to occupy as the nucleus of the life of Venice.

The central portion of the Piazza is 192 yards long by 90 broad on the eastern or San Marco, and 61 on the western or Palazzo Reale end.

What the Piazza di San Marco is to the Venetians can only be understood by those who are intimately acquainted with the

* The nine Procurators, second in power to the Doge alone, lived in the palaces of the Piazza: hence this name.—*Trs.*



A SHOE-BLACK.



THE CLOCK TOWER ON THE PIAZZA DI SAN MARCO.

inner life of their town. According to the time at which it is visited, it is the forum for the transaction of civil and political business, the market for buying and selling all manner of goods, the exchange, the place for the drawing of lotteries, the gondola station, the scene of church or secular *fêtes*, the promenade of all classes, the summer *rendezvous* of the upper ten, the open-air tribunal, at the time of the carnival the ballroom, the spot where artists of all kinds meet to discuss their affairs, the stage for religious ceremonies, the place to secure seats at the theatre or to have your boots blacked—"La pattina, la pattina, lucido!" rings the cry, reminding us that well-polished shoes often make up for worn-out costumes—

the place where the latest news is to be had by every one from all parts of the world; in a word, the meeting-point of all Venice—especially of those who have any interests in common—from porters and factory girls to the *élite* of society.

Every article of dress can be bought alike by ladies and gentlemen in the Piazza, and things are very *chic* there too. Jewels and art fabrics, antique and modern, of every variety, are there displayed to suit every taste and purse; and at any hour of the day or night, without leaving the square, you can get a hot or a cold meal, anything you fancy to drink, and sweetmeats to toy with; or you can have your hair cut or dressed; and last, not least, you can thoroughly steep yourself in an atmosphere of art, for from whatever point of view you look at this nucleus of all that is best in the whole world, your eyes will rest upon some scene of satisfying beauty.

This noble marble-paved square, where dust and the noise of carriages, with the barking of dogs, are alike unknown, where the rain sinks away as soon as it has fallen, leaving the stones as clean and fresh as ever, is not alone the focus of the grandeur of Venezia, it is her very heart, it is herself; for in it is contained all that her citizens can need.

Differences of rank cease to exist face to face with this stone Ninon de Lenclos,* as a witty Frenchman dubbed the Piazza, and the unique square loses not one iota of its grandeur thereby, as we can well understand when we remember that the banner of the Republic was set up in Venice in the fourteenth century.

* Ninon de Lenclos was a French beauty of the 17th century, famed for the number of her lovers and for the fact that she retained many of her charms till the age of ninety, when she died.—*Trs.*

We saunter slowly up and down the Piazza, now sitting down outside some café, first one side and then another, meeting at every turn fresh details of the highest artistic value.

But let us pause a moment to look up at the Clock Tower, with its big dial-plate visible from a long distance off. This tower is one of the curiosities of Venice, and was erected by Pietro Lombardo, one of the Lombardi family, with whose name so much of the best architecture in Venice is associated. La Torre dell' Orologio dates from 1496, and is remarkable for two black giants on a platform, which strike the hours with their hammers, and are called by the Venetians "i Mari." From the Feast of the Epiphany to the beginning of Lent, and during the week between Ascension Day and Whit Sunday, the figures of the three kings who came to worship the

Infant Christ may be seen to issue every hour from one of the two doors leading to the gallery of the tower where the Madonna sits enthroned, and passing in front of her they remove their crowns, bow low before her, and walk off to the second door on the other side, through which they disappear. This pretty little puppet-show caused an immense amount of excitement at the time of its erection, and even now, especially at Whitsuntide, crowds of country-folk collect to stare up at it.

The general effect—we mean of the tower itself—is highly decorative, and is quite inseparable from our thoughts of Venice, for it rises up in our memories in connection with so many characteristic scenes. Truly a typical bit of local colouring is this trusty old Torre dell' Orologio, which greets us directly we set foot in Venice from the water-side and come in sight of the Piazzetta.

How much the surroundings have to do with the effect of a fine building is evident even to the uninitiated in the Clock Tower of the neighbouring Udine. The Torre dell' Orologio of Venice has been imitated at Udine to the very smallest detail, but the result is merely thoroughly baroque, because the harmony between the tower, the figures, and the lions is wanting.

The device of the noble Venetian lion with outstretched paws upon the cover of the Gospels, with the background of star-flecked azure blue sky, gave



UNDER THE ARCADES OF THE
PROCURATIE VECCHIE.

rise to a clever *bon mot*. In 1797, when novelty was the rage, the motto of the lion of San Marco, "Pax tibi Marce Evangelista meus," was converted into the formula, "Droits de l'homme et du citoyen"; and a gondolier—the gondoliers of Venice are noted for their wit and ready repartee—cried, "Il leone gha voltà pagina" (the lion has turned over a new leaf). It was not long, however, before the lion of the Clock Tower, with all his winged comrades, returned to the old "Pax tibi Marce Evangelista meus."

We meant only just to look at the time, but the stones of Venice have all such a lot to say for themselves that it is very difficult to tear ourselves away from them. It is eleven o'clock now, and at twelve o'clock we expect an acquaintance to have *di collazione* with us.

But we will just turn into the Procuratie Vecchie first, to which a path leads direct from the Clock Tower. It is always pleasant to stroll about in these arcades, for they are well protected from the heat and dust. We pass jeweller's shop after jeweller's shop beneath this porticus with its fifty arches, and the electric light almost deceives us into fancying we are looking at the gems by starlight. It is the same with the unrivalled verroterie, or glass-ware, which, with the crimson plush setting, presents quite a fairy-like appearance. The only thing, however, which we really cannot pass without stopping to examine it, is a very lovely Venetian necklace of thirty strings, or fili as they are technically called, such as Venice is famed for all the world over. This wonderful collar is made of niello, or enamel beads, of about the size of a thaler, and the clasp consists of a many-coloured representation of the old arms of Venice or of the winged lion. The necklace is worn so that the clasp comes in front on the centre of the throat. A

celebrated ornament of this kind, coveted by all foreign ladies, is that made by Angelo Missiaglia, and as it consists of ducats of the finest gold, not one of which had ever been used, it must have cost a very large sum.

It is really marvellous how many jewellers work and thrive in Venice. All Italians—especially the Venetians, who have more affinity with Orientals than their sisters of the rest of the peninsula—delight as much in decking themselves out with jewels as the women of the Orient, and in spite of their love of economy in other respects, squander large sums upon their ornaments.

Seated in front of the Cafés, Trattorie, German Birrerie, and drinking-saloons called "American bars" and resembling those on the other side of the Atlantic, may be seen at this hour of the day many a daintily-dressed and befrizzled fop, with the inevitable flower, bought from the equally inevitable flower-girl, in his button-hole, gazing into the blue, or, to be strictly accurate, up at the greyish-blue curtains which hang down from the roofing of the



A BEGGAR WOMAN.

arcades, and flutter in the soft sea-breeze which always comes in to freshen the atmosphere about noon.

The art of distributing light inside and outside a house is peculiarly the secret of the southern races, and deserves a chapter to itself, for, unimportant as the subject may appear, it affects the most highly-cultured classes in a very remarkable degree. Too dazzling a light, especially when the thermometer is high, causes irritation, restlessness, and lowness of spirits.

Very few of the frequenters of these places of entertainment appear to eat anything, for, looking up from our newspaper, we see that most of the tables are empty. It is one of the best privileges of the Venetian that he is not expected to treat his friends more than once a day; he just sits down opposite his café to have a chat with any of his acquaintances who happen to pass, to suck the top of his cane and dream away the time alone, or to recognize any female beauty with an almost imperceptible smile of admiration in his eyes—oh, yes, eyes *can* smile, only it is as well not to let them do so too openly at this time of day when toilettes are in *negligé*, and ladies moving in good society seldom appear on the Piazza except on great *fête* days of the church, when they come to have their shoes polished. Netta Scarpa, as the artist's pencil has represented him here, is generally a very irresistible person, and his only rival in the favour of the frequenters of the Procuratie is the blind newspaper seller, Casa Matta, a poor devil with an original wit and plenty of sympathy ready for everybody. *Casa matta* means a topsy-turvy house, and the bearer of this nick-name, in spite of his decrepitude and blindness, is really a droll fellow, with whom every one likes to crack a joke.

"Who are those old and young men who are able to take things so easily at this time of day?" we enquired of the acquaintance we were expecting, and who had now joined us. In reply, our friend, who was a resident in Venice and knew the people well, ran off a long string of high-sounding names, many of them associated with the history of the island city, and whose owners still enjoyed incomes good enough to allow them to do nothing. Then he mentioned several painters; and the rest, whose names he did not know, he characterised under the all-embracing title of the *Disperati*, the Venetian name for all those who have no money, do nothing and belong to no particular class. Such are the frequenters



A NEWSPAPER SELLER.

of the Procuratie Vecchie at midday. To these we must add the owners of the various shops in which costly luxuries are sold, elegant gentlemen, most of them with their hats on their heads, who try to pass the time during the slack hours by paying each other visits, or lounging on the sofas and easy chairs of some neighbouring drinking saloon, which they look upon as a kind of continuation of their own premises.

And here we are once more at a point where a little explanation is desirable. The true Venetian looks upon the street as a mere corridor to his own house. The absence of wheeled vehicles is probably at the root of this idea.

As we stroll along in the cool stone grove, we pass yet more shops full of costly products of Venetian industry: glass, mosaics, filigree work, point lace, and antique silken textures, quaint life-sized figures carved in wood, furniture ornamented with iron filigree work or carved and inlaid, all of truly artistic design and workmanship; all manner of reproductions of masterpieces of pictorial art; antique and modern Venetian mirrors, memorial mosaics and other examples of monumental art, all Venetian specialities, peculiarly fascinating to the foreigner. The thought is first borne in upon us that in the inner labyrinths of this town, where at first sight life seems to be one long dream of pleasure, there must be many important industries and many skilled artisans. We mentally resolve that they shall not be overlooked.

First of all, however, standing as we are upon historic ground, it behoves us to glance back into the past, and to find out what these Procuratie looked like in the days when the Procurators of San Marco, second in dignity to the Doge alone, were familiar to all as they went to and fro in the full pomp of their violet robes with the crimson silk collars.

Even at the beginning of the thirties the imposing Renaissance structure, with its wide, richly-decorated cornices, which from our point of view near the Clock Tower encloses the whole of the left wing of the Piazza, was devoted by the effeminate descendants of an ancient race to purposes of anything but a public character. As houses of accommodation, or we may perhaps rather say supplementary establishments, for the *petits maitres* of the day, they were frequented by gallant rather than noble occupiers. Later, merchant princes took up their quarters in the spacious, richly-decorated apartments, which were henceforth devoted to many different branches of commerce.

On the first story are the dining-rooms of the Café Quadri, connected with which are the rooms in which were held the permanent exhibitions of glass manufactured by the world-famous firms of Salviati and Testolini, which became one of the sights of Venice; and seen from below, the effect of the twenty-one rooms, when lit up from countless beautiful glass chandeliers, is truly magical.

But we really must not talk longer about the present day. We must hurry back to the sixteenth century, when Venice was at the zenith of her power. Andrea Gritti, the gifted doge, employed and protected Sansovino, Titian and Sammichele. Sansovino, under whose skilful hands rose up the Loggetta at the base of the Campanile, the finest specimen of the kind in Venice, the Zecca, or Mint, upheld by fine columns, which overlooks the Piazzetta and in front of the entrance of which,



THE LOGGETTA.

beneath the Procuratie Nuove, the two gigantic caryatides keep watch, and the "Libreria Nuova"; Sammichele, who was as successful with fortifications as with works of art properly so called, and to whom we owe the masterpiece of beauty and stability known as the Castello di Sant' Andrea del Lido; Titian, Veronese, Giorgione and Tintoretto painted in Venice; and here, too, worked the witty but shameless author Pietro Bacci, surnamed "Aretino," from his birthplace, the Tuscan Arezzo. A bastard, the son of a nobleman named Luigi Bacci, Pietro was driven from his native town, but in spite of his undoubted vulgarity, his ready wit led to his being received at nearly every court, and, remarkable fact for the period of which we are writing, he obtained the favour of crowned heads, growing rich, to quote his own words, "Col sudore dei miei inchiostri" (literally, "in the sweat of my own ink"). At Venice Aretino was one of the leaders in the lascivious society of the day and lived in the greatest luxury, but—strange contrast again—he was always extremely good to the poor, a proof, if proof were needed, of the wonderful versatility of his genius.

At this time the Procurators still lived in the palaces above the arcades named after them, and vied with each other in the splendour of their appointments and the lavishness of their expenditure, as did all the officials under the Serenissima in this golden age of prosperity.

In the Republic of the Winged Lion, as elsewhere, there were degrees of rank and position in spite of the supposed equality. The offices under the Doge were nominally unsalable, but for all the various enterprises undertaken a lot of

money was required, and it was drawn into the coffers of the State by means of a thoroughly Jesuitical character.

The advisers of the Republic—the procurators already so often referred to—were always ready to sanction an advance of a step or two in social dignity in consideration of a money payment. This can be proved by letters actually written by them to the Senate, in which the lowest sum named was some twelve thousand ducats. The Senate duly accepted the bribe, and the giver of it got an appointment, was made a patrician, or received a title.

The people, however, kept an argus eye on these transactions, and were not always ready to endorse the deeds of the Senate, when it was urged that "Needs must when the devil drives." An incident illustrating what we have been saying occurred on one occasion in the sixteenth century just opposite the windows which are now lit up so magnificently every evening with electric light. The Republic wanted money dreadfully badly to strengthen the position in the colonies, then threatened by the Turks, so they accepted a good round sum from three citizens, who were in return elected procurators. One of them, however, was not only a mere nobody, but the money he had used as a bribe had not been very honestly come by. In the evening, therefore, after the pompous installation of the new procurators, a mob collected beneath the windows of the palace, and greeted him with ear-splitting yells of derision. The new procurator, who was not wanting in courage, thought to get the mastery by showing a bold front, so he appeared at the window. But it was no good; he was greeted, as the chronicler Juan de Lugo calls it, with a *superbo tutti*, and all manner of domestic utensils, some of metal, some of earthenware, some of wood, were flung against the window, until at last the unlucky counsellor, seeing there was no help for it, threw out his freshly drawn up decree of office, which was quickly torn into a thousand pieces to the accompaniment of the derisive laughter of his enemies. Crestfallen and ashamed, he was compelled to retire again into the obscurity of private life.

The past history of Venice is really of far greater importance than is generally believed. It is most intimately bound up with the present, and it has very justly been said that no one can claim to understand the Venezia of to-day who is unacquainted with all that has made her what she is.

But now for a rapid glance at the Procuratie Nuove, that colonnade which is always cool even on the hottest June day. Here things appear very much the same in the early part of the day as they do over in the Procuratie Vecchie. Tripping about amongst the aristocrats, officials, and the privileged idlers so cleverly dubbed *Disperati*, are the flower-girls in their fresh youth, and the middle-aged seller of wild flowers from the country, who reminds us, with his two baskets full of floral treasures, of some kitchen garden in late autumn. A group of painters, whose names it would perhaps be indiscreet to give, but whose canvases will be recognised in many a forthcoming exhibition, always appear at Florian's about this time to take their *collazione* or *déjeuner à la fourchette* together.

In this classical colonnade, with its thirty-six arches, there reigns a kind of hush, for here business never makes itself obtrusive, for though there are a good many old curiosity shops and other art warehouses, their owners have no



THE PIAZZETTA DEI LEONCINI, ADJOINING THE PIAZZA DI SAN MARCO.

need to advertise their wares—those who want them know well where to find them. The fact that we can go up from here to the regal apartments on the first floor, which every foreigner ought to visit, is yet another attraction of these Procuratie; and there, too, we can enjoy absolute quiet. And the “volte” once gone through, as they say in the breaking in of horses, we shall come in due course to the permanent art exhibitions, housed in rooms on the same floor in the last wing of the colonnade, which every one ought to see, for they form a kind of monthly record of the art industries of Venice.

Nearer the Piazzetta all is changed, and trade takes the place of art. Agents of ship-brokers, consignors of merchandise, offices of steamship companies, storehouses, &c., occupy this wing, and the frequenters of the neighbouring cafés are all busy people. The bank buildings, once the old Zecca or mint, the newly-built well-situated Café alla Borsa, looking out towards the Molo, occupying three arcades of the Zecca, form the finest point of view of the Procuratie Nuove, of which Sansovino drew the plans, carried out in 1582, unfortunately with certain alterations, by Vincenzo Scamozzi.

Time flies fast when you are talking about the past. Why, it is twelve o'clock already again; we hear the twelve long-drawn-out strokes from the Clock Tower of San Marco, and at the same moment rings out a cannon-shot from San Giorgio, the signal for all Venice that lunch time has arrived. In a moment the scene is changed. The Piazza is at once full of people eager for their midday meal; and at the same time appear hundreds of winged beggars whom nobody dreams of driving away, for their privileges have been secured to them for many long years.

The pigeons of San Marco, which nest in great numbers amongst the arches and decorations of the various buildings, come down in flocks, circling

about the church and piazza as if, pensioners of the Republic as they are, they knew full well that they have a right to the food so amply provided for them by their many patrons and friends. A very beautiful picture is this daily gathering on the Piazza of the pigeons at noon and at two o'clock, a poetic picture which never loses its charm. Foreigners, especially, are very fond of feeding them, and ladies and children are lavish with corn, which their favourites eat out of their hands. So tame and confiding have the gentle creatures become, through a long course of indulgence and petting, that they often settle on the hands, arms or shoulders of their friends.



A FLOWER SELLER.



FEEDING THE PIGEONS OF SAN MARCO.

Tradition relates that the Venetians owed the taking of Candia to their pigeons, even as the Romans did the saving of the Capitol to their geese. And really the little creatures, when they have got over their daily alarm at the cannon shot, and taken off the edge of their hunger, strut about as if they felt that they really were set above all their relations by some such wonderful achievement.

Shortly told, the legend runs as follows: From early times the people of the Orient employed pigeons as carriers of messages. When the Venetian fleet, supported by that of Genoa, under Reniero Dandolo, was blockading Candia, some officers in Dandolo's service often noticed pigeons flying across the battle-field in the direction of the Genoese ships, which were under the command of the Duke of Malta, then the ally of the Venetians, who had hastened to their aid. As the crafty Genoese were not altogether to be trusted, Dandolo was rather startled at this news, and ordered some of the pigeons to be caught when they again appeared at the mouth of the Archipelago, below Mount Ida, where the Genoese vessels lay. On the arrival of the winged messengers a practised hand let fly a few arrows, and seven or eight fell mortally wounded. Each one had beneath its wing a similar missive betraying the understanding between the Candiotes and Genoese. The commander-in-chief knew enough now to hesitate no longer. The next night he stormed Candia, drove back the faithless and unsuspecting Genoese, and took possession of the island. In the palace of the governor the victorious Venetians found a number of pigeons, which Dandolo had taken to Venice, where they were treated with all honour. Their descendants are still looked upon as sacred, and are tended with the greatest care.

This is one version. Now for another. In very early times it was the custom in Venezia on Palm Sundays to amuse the people by setting free a number of pigeons, each hampered by a chain which made it fly near the ground. There was then a trial of skill as to who should most deftly catch the poor creatures, which were taken home by the winners to serve as tit-bits at their feasts; the patricians looking on in amused delight from the palace windows. Some few of the persecuted creatures managed to get free of the chains, and took refuge in the many cosy nooks behind the ornate cornice, where they lived unmolested and brought up their young.

The probability is that both stories are true, and that the position held by the pigeons in Venice now is partly the result of each of the experiences just related.

The pigeons have ever shared the veneration accorded to the winged lion in Venice, and there is something almost of awe in the tenderness with which they are regarded. No Venetian would dare to catch or imprison the birds, still less to eat them, though, of course, they would be very acceptable to those who haven't got a chicken to put in their pots, as Henry IV. wished every one of his subjects to have! A gondolier, who was once bribed by a wealthy Englishman to secure a pair of the finest of the pigeons and to take them on board his employer's yacht, was so badly treated that the police had to interfere on his behalf and take him by force out of the hands of his indignant fellow-townsmen. The pigeons of San Marco are revered as talismans in Venice.

These stories about them have delayed us another quarter of an hour, and meanwhile the aspect of the Piazza has changed yet again. The cannon shot was not only the signal for the birds to fly down from their sheltered niches behind the cornice, but also for all the clerks in the various offices to lay down their pens as if at the word of command from their chiefs, and hurry through the Procuratie to take their second breakfast, and enjoy their one short hour of rest during the day in one or another restaurant hard by. As a result, the Piazza is for some ten minutes full of life and animation, and even the late risers, who do not think it good form to appear before the midday cannon signal has been heard, may be seen gathering together now.

All about the flagstaffs with their winged lions are charming groups pausing to exchange greetings or to make up little luncheon parties. Though from these flagstaffs no longer float the silken banners of the Morea, Cyprus, and Candia, symbolising the vast possessions of the Republic, the far-stretching influence of Venice is still illustrated by the many different nationalities represented here. It is at such a time as this that the Piazza appears at its best—at least, at its best during the hours of broad daylight, for of course at midday there is none of the glamour or mystery which have so much to do with the fascination exercised on all comers by the unrivalled Venezia. As in all works of art, every picture in Venice gains by something being left to the imagination of the spectator. It was this secret which Turner—most successful of all the exponents of Venetian effects of colour and chiaroscuro—so completely fathomed in his many exquisite water-colour views of the fair city of his admiration; and we may perhaps add that it was this same secret which Canaletto, in his more prosaic renderings of the same scenes, to a certain extent missed.



GIRL BRINGING CORN FOR THE PIGEONS.

But we are again wandering off into side issues and must return to the Piazza itself. From November to April the fashionable world congregates to bask in the sunshine on the Piazza from two to four, or according to the new Italian form from the hour of fourteen to that of sixteen, and four times a week to listen to the civic or military band, both first-rate performers of good German music, which the public seem to appreciate thoroughly. This love of German music, when so much that is beautiful has been produced by Italian composers, is a compliment none appreciate more than the Teutons who flock to the City of the Lagoons.

On a bright clear autumn, or even winter, day, the beautiful buildings on

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the Piazza, especially the façade of San Marco with its marvellous wealth of architectural ornaments, are seen to the very greatest advantage. The atmosphere is so transparent, that every detail, however minute, can be distinctly recognised, and there is about the whole a repose which in other lights is rather wanting to this very complex structure. It is, in fact, a marked peculiarity of the whole of Venice, especially of the fine architectural groups on the Piazza di San Marco, that they appear totally different under different conditions, whether of atmosphere or of light, and affect the spectator in a number of different ways. In addition to its many other attractions, the unrivalled Basilica d'Oro also owns the fine horses in gilded bronze attributed to Lysippus, which were already old in the time of Nero, and are said to have been taken as spoil from the Greeks. Other authors say, however, that the Greeks stole them from Nero and took them away from Rome, where they adorned that Emperor's Arch of Triumph. All that is certain is that they were taken to Byzantium by order of Theodosius, in the fourth century of the Christian era, and that good critic was of opinion that they were of Roman, not of Greek origin. The horses of the Greeks were of suppler build, and had more finely-wrought harness than these golden-bronze steeds of the Golden Church. The weight of one of the four is over seventeen hundred pounds. Carried away by the Venetians after the taking of Constantinople, in 1205, they were at first placed opposite the Arsenal, and removed much later to their present position.

We have, however, left the good folk on the Piazza in the lurch again, but we really cannot help drifting back into the past amongst our present surroundings, and, as we are likely to fall into the same error again and again, we do not mean to apologise for it any more. We left the *élite* of the fashionable world, foreigners and natives alike, sitting in the sunshine listening to the good music of one of the bands; but only now are we able to tear ourselves away from our contemplation of the inanimate stone beauties on every side, to give due attention to the many lovely and fascinating women in costly costumes who take eye and heart by storm. We must introduce them next. With faces half hidden by big white or rose-coloured silk sunshades, giving to them a touch of mystery, they are seated in the same Piazza where Shakespeare's "Othello" first saw his "Desdemona," and where Bianca Cappello—this we know for very certain—gave Bonaventurini the sign which preceded her flight from her father's house. Each one of these Venetian women is in herself a poem. On this spot, so full of memories, we learn to understand the magic fascination of the drama; we realize that the world of the Piazza is really a stage, and all the men and women on it players. To what marvellous, what intensely interesting scenes have its noble buildings formed the setting! Who does not remember the regal reception given to Catarina Cornaro here, when on her return from Cyprus, though the death of her husband had lost her the throne, she appeared opposite the Golden Basilica with all the pomp of a royal personage, was hailed as thrice a queen, and taken under the protection of Venice to the sound of the ringing of hundreds of bells? The incident was chosen by Makart, the great Austrian spectacular and historical *genre* painter, as the theme of one of his most important pictures.

Women little know how wonderfully the beautiful Piazzas of San Marco sets off their charms, especially in the mild sunshine of a winter or early spring day,



MUSIC ON THE PIAZZA DI SAN MARCO.

when the old church literally radiates golden beams reflected from the fair young faces gazing up at its time-honoured glories, and borrowing from it something of its triumphant elation of expression. And when the sun sinks lower, and the shadows lengthen, the capricious beauties in stone and gold become transformed in appearance, their features grow gradually paler—one is almost tempted to say more diaphanous—these marvellous creations in stone which affect us much as do the thousand and one nights in fiction, as the sunshine imprints on them the hurried farewell kiss of the short winter twilight, and day is suddenly converted into night—soft, soothing, gentle night, reminding us of the smile of some young mother, or of the rapt ecstasy of some devotee before the figure of the Redeemer in a quiet village church. How different does the whole scene appear on a hot summer's day, when it resembles more the dream of some Oriental potentate, with the medley of turrets and chapels, the golden cupolas, the crosses, the weather-cocks, the angels and saints, in which blue and gold predominate, standing out darkly, yet distinctly and imposingly, from beneath their pale gold garlands of stone, whilst the greenish grey of the main material of the buildings looks leaden by contrast. Or again at night what a change is there, when everything around is steeped in darkness, and there is no light in heaven but the pale light of stars; when all styles are blended into one harmonious whole, and the whole mighty mass of buildings glows as with the white heat of a conflagration before everything falls to pieces in ashes; when the great lunettes gleam like huge diamonds, and the general effect is of some mysterious unfathomable chaos, the very spires and

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towers resembling hieroglyphic writing traced upon the night sky by the invisible hand of some cyclops.

Many indeed are the phases assumed by everything which transcends the ordinary, many and many the impressions made on the human spectator by such a masterpiece of manifold charm as this quaint, this bizarre Basilica of San Marco, with regard to which it is said a great architect replied, when asked to what style it belonged, "Style? You ask me to what style San Marco should be assigned? To none, for since when did a marvel have a style?"

Yes, as of its mother city, the Venezia of old, we may say with regard to this conglomerate example of the Byzantine, Moorish, Gothic, and Lombardic styles, that in spite of its inorganic nature there is about it a distinct, a living personality, which can be felt by all who come within its influence.

Is it not much the same with the moon? Do we not look upon her in moments of our highest emotion as a friend who is able to sympathise and feel with us? Yet we know that this moon—this old white sorceress who lights up the night for us—is, as she has been justly called by a learned writer, "but a lifeless form amongst the heavenly bodies."

But really we must tear ourselves away from the façade of the church, which enthralls us as does no other of the many priceless gems of the shrine called the Piazza di San Marco. And after all what is the day—soft, peaceful and beautiful in colouring though it be—compared with late evening for a stroll in this flirtation resort *par excellence*? What do all the bright young fellows dressed in the height of fashion care about the time of day when they are on this renowned spot, sacred for centuries to courtship, to merrymaking, to display? The young of either sex do not trouble their heads about the past or the future; they live in the present moment alone. And what glorious eyes some of them have! Good heavens! Why are we no longer young? we sigh with many another whose hearts are still fresh, although time has mercilessly written on our faces the runes of past experiences. Ah, indeed! Why are we no longer young? Because we enjoyed our youth some time ago, is the remorseless answer. Why did a relentless fate prevent our being here as pages in the suite of the Duke of Norfolk? Why were we not able to sing with Verdi's Falstaff on this battlefield of the eyes? Alas! it is not only amongst the living that atavism occurs, it can be seen in inanimate things as well; it all depends upon the throw of the dice.

Here so many love scenes have been enacted, such thrilling experiences have been lived through, that it is no wonder the very stones seem charged with a kind of electricity, making those susceptible to their magic influence feel that they would rather meet their fate here than anywhere else. Connoisseurs in affairs of the heart know well that no bliss can compare with the exchange of loving glances, and they understand the quaint paradox of a Swedish poet of the day when he exclaimed, "To have one thing is to own everything." The power lovers possess of losing themselves in each other as their eyes meet, and being for a few seconds at least lost to all the world beside, has been forcibly brought home to us by Shakespeare once for all in his "Romeo and Juliet." Had the great student of humanity ever seen the Piazza di San Marco with his own eyes, which he unfortunately never did, he would have credited lovers' glances with even greater power. Here or nowhere



A VENETIAN GIRL OF THE MIDDLE CLASS.

is the right place for lovers to exchange their vows without a spoken word, in the brief space of a short summer evening, and to express with their eyes what the tongue is powerless to tell, and what perchance will be forgotten the next morning ; for after all it was but the magic of the spot where the two pairs of eyes met which led to their silent declarations.

And is not this a charming and delightful fact in a world where, as a rule, pain and sorrow so terribly overbalance joy ? Very likely ! But what has all this innocent by-play to do with the Piazza di San Marco ? asks the matter-of-fact reader, for whom, however, Venezia is no place, for she is more than the abode of art ; she is the abode of love—the island of Cythera, where the goddess of love and beauty is worshipped at the present day.

The young, unless they are very cold-blooded, will long directly they enter Venice to love and to be loved. Joking apart, the necessity for love is in the

very air. Love in Venice, too, really means love, and costs double what it does elsewhere—just as prices go up in time of war. Who does not hold deep hidden in his heart—if he is not lucky enough to have her beside him—the image of an ideal beloved one? Be very sure that as soon as you arrive in Venice that old love will come forth once more from the recesses of the memory, and the torch once put to the yearning for affection it will blaze up afresh, to meet perchance a response from the eyes of some other in similar case to whom you have unconsciously revealed the secret history of the past. And when in the *Fliegende Blätter*,* the favourite of the world, is asked, “Were you ever in Venice?” and the answer is, “No, my heart is still free!” does it not prove that Venice really is, as we said, the true Cythera of the world of to-day?

* The *Fliegende Blätter* is a comic German periodical.—*Trs.*



THE WINGED LION OF SAN MARCO
(xx80).



A VENETIAN GIRL OF THE PEOPLE.

The Local Colouring of Venice.

"Et Venise est si belle qu'une chaîne sur elle,
semble un collier, jeté sur la beauté." *

Alfred de Musset.

The local colouring of Venice deserves a chapter to itself. We are not responsible for this assertion; it is proved by the efforts of many and many an artist who has tried to catch it in vain. It is the best amongst modern painters, those who are most thoroughly in touch with the time in every way, who admit that they feel powerless to render this unique quality of Venice. They gaze for hours at the scene before them in a kind of trance, yet thoroughly on the alert, struggling to comprehend the untranslatable beauties of this unique city, which affects no one more deeply than the artist, who works from sunrise to sunset in a vain effort to solve the secrets of the ever-varying effects of colour, which succeed each other with such marvellous rapidity.

Local colouring, in the spiritual as well as the material sense, is a matter of vital importance now-a-days amongst the best artists. A picture, however accurate, is no longer considered a masterpiece, unless it is steeped in the local colouring of its surroundings. This is the more necessary in Venice, for from early days, before the name for it was invented, the truthful rendering of the quality under discussion was one of the most marked characteristics of the work of Venetian painters.

* Venice is so fair that a chain on her seems but a necklace flung around her beauty.

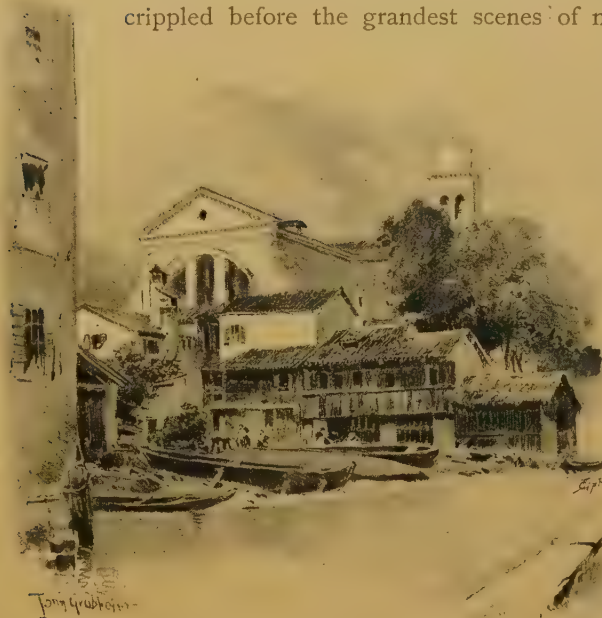
To be true to nature, in the modern sense, and to do justice to the colouring of Venice, the artist must have every conceivable tint upon his palette, and know how to blend all harmoniously. An eminent art critic, one of the advisers of the Italian Government in matters of art, the architect, Professor Camillo Boito, brother of the composer and poet, Arrigo Boito, to whom the world owes the opera of "Mephistopheles," says in an essay on the local colouring of Venice: "The colouring of Venice is unfathomable," and we may almost add, there is something metaphysical about it, for directly we try to touch or analyse it it melts into nothing. "Tints," explains Boito, "which are the salt of the water, the breath of the sirocco, the emanations from the dried-up canals, magically mingled with the atmosphere laden with the mist and moisture exhaled by animate and inanimate nature, all this taken together makes up what we understand by the local colouring of Venice. Under these unique conditions the filthy rags of the beggar, the blackened ruins of past glory, supplemented and intensified by a cloudless sky, acquire a radiancy of colouring all their own, in which, however, every outline is distinctly marked. The colours of Venice are made up of equal quantities of glory and of gloom, two elements which make up one admirable quality, a quality of the utmost importance to the painter, in fact, the only one for true picturesque effect."

Every artist knows that there are beautiful effects which it is impossible to fix on canvas. This is indeed the case not only with the painter, but also with the author, for there are many vivid impressions in his mind which he feels are well worthy to be written down, yet which, when he takes his pen in his hand, altogether elude expression.

Many and many a scene which fills the artist with enthusiasm is really no fit subject for a picture. Indeed, as Boito warns his fellow-students, "it is necessary to be very careful not to mistake nervous susceptibility for true æsthetic observation. Artists share with delicate women a certain irritability of nerve. This very sensitiveness is what makes them artists, and is to blame if they puff themselves out like frogs when face to face with nature. How deep is the mystery which lies at the root of all artistic impulse! How often genius is crippled before the grandest scenes of nature, before great human beauty, or the mighty incidents of past history! Yet that same genius is aroused and inspired by a mere nothing, which places him, however, in touch with all that is highest and most important."

Only those who are genuine art workers can realize how true this analysis of art experience is. An example of its justice will nevertheless be useful to the outsider who is not a professor of any branch of art. Here, then, is a Venetian picture:

The sun is sinking between the Salute and the Palazzo Ducale, lighting up the water with a crimson



SAN TROVASO, THE PAINTERS' CORNER.



glow stretching away in long dashes of colour to the more distant palaces on the Canal Grande and down to the Riva degli Schiavoni. When a gondola shoots across this tract of brilliant colour, the crimson is dashed with yellow, molten as the fused glass in the workshops of Murano, and from the oar drops liquid gold. The windows above the vessels at anchor in the harbour flash back the last dying sunbeams, and the masts of the boats rise up like golden staves from the azure blue water. A sunset such as this is a most impressive sight, but it is not just the right subject for a picture or for a verbal description.

Here is yet another tableau which seems cut out for reproduction with the brush; but for all that it is impossible to do full justice to it or to give anything like all its details. It is the fashion now-a-days amongst the more advanced school of artists to give, with the utmost technical skill and truth to nature, details of a fine scene such as strike the observer at first sight, although they are in reality of but little importance.

"Now for the picture I am talking about," says Boito, to quote further from a critic whom we think it desirable to make better known than he is as yet amongst German and English readers. "It was a pitch-dark night, and my way led me towards the Ponte del Sepolcro. Heavy raindrops were falling upon the *felze* of my gondola, of which I had window and door both open. The red lantern of my little bark, which was quite close to me, looked as if it were far away, gleaming like some watch-tower out at sea through the mist. We glided for some distance along the Canal Grande, and then turned into narrow Rivi, upon the troubled waters of which the lights from the houses above cast their pale gleam. Every now and then the gondolier stooped to pass beneath a low black bridge. On the steps of the

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landing-stages or mooring-places and on the walls of the Fondamenta, above which rose the shadowy forms of the houses, moved dark mysterious patches which, as the gondola passed them, leaped into the water with a splash. I did not feel at all at ease in these narrow, gloomy, winding water-ways, shut in between lofty buildings. Peering about me, I tried to make out the name of one of the alleys we were passing. At last I spied a few letters, which I painfully spelt out, and they gave the reading *Calle dei Morti*, or the lane of the dead, and there could not have been a more appropriate title. 'How I wish I were a painter!' I cried. The exclamation was as spontaneous as it was sincere, but hardly had it left my lips when my critical instinct whispered to me: What you wish is absurd, idiotic. For this romantically awesome night scene, with its accompaniment of rats, which so enchains your senses and arouses your imagination to something like ecstasy, will prove, on closer examination, to be no fitting theme for the brush. One or another thrilling detail might perhaps be treated effectively by some skilled hand and make a good picture, but to render the whole successfully would be quite out of the question."

For all that, however, there are any number of the noblest and most effective subjects to be found in Venice. Nowhere else, taking things all round, do artists have such a good time as they do in Venice. Hence they delight to live in the old rats' nest, as some of them disrespectfully dub *Venezia*, and to which, in spite of this pleasantry, they are all devotedly attached. Only now and then they grumble at the number of problems the old Bride of the Sea gives them to solve, for, not to speak of the marvellous backgrounds, there are all manner of different types, half-concealed nudities, costumes, etc., to be studied which are amongst the fundamental elements making up that charm peculiar to Venice and so extremely difficult to render.

The indolence characteristic of the Venetians is a very great help to the artist who wishes to reproduce them on his canvas, and the critic already so often quoted has a very effective remark to make on that subject. "Busy men," he says, "with their hasty, ungraceful movements and gestures, and their total indifference to their surroundings, are simply hopeless when considered from the art point of view. Beautiful compared to them are those to whom time and money are no objects. Lazy people move slowly, look out for comfortable places, and have leisure to let the joys and sorrows of others, the pathos and the tragedy of nature, be reflected in their faces. Types such as these are at home in Venice." No commentary is needed on this pregnant remark: its truth is so patent that every one will feel that it is exactly what he has always thought.

There is no vehicular traffic in Venice to drive groups of gossipers on to the side walks, and people who want to have a chat together can pause in mid-street without any fear of being interrupted. The coachman has to sit still upon his box, and even if he does get down for once, he has to keep his eye on his carriage and to shout at the top of his voice to make himself heard above the din of wheels. It is very different with the gondolier. He fastens his bark to the ring in the quay and is perfectly free to watch the flight of the swallows, or to exchange a war of witty repartee with his comrades, just as his fancy dictates.



THE RIO DEL LOVO.

If it is true, as the Venetians say it is, that the sirocco is to blame for their charming indolence, every friend of the special peculiarities of Venezia will cry, "Long live the sirocco!"

All that we have been saying does not, at first sight, appear to have much to do with the local colouring of Venice; but when you look closely into the matter, you will find it is not really so wide of the mark, for all these things, taken together, help to make up the fascination of the sea-girt city. Truth to tell, this local colouring gives endless work to the modern artist, who is not content, as his predecessors were, to render the outside husk, but must give the very kernel of every subject he treats.

Not so very long ago we were supplied with plenty of pictures of the buildings of Venice, the Doge in State robes, gondolas, and above all, fair Venetian women,

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each with the black veil on her head faithfully rendered. If these things were cleverly represented, we felt we had a bit of Venice herself before us. Now, however, we must have more than that; we want the typical figures not only of the present, but of the past; we insist on having the very soul, the very spiritual essence, of Venezia, an essence altogether peculiar to herself, and unless we do get it, we are not satisfied.

We do not much care through what medium it is translated for us; all that we do insist upon is that the spirit of the artist should be thoroughly steeped in, thoroughly mingled with, that of whatever scene he depicts.

Long conscientious study and single-minded devotion are needed before an artist can give a vivid rendering of what is before his eyes, whilst all that a spectator requires is just a spark of imagination in order to call up before his mental vision the characteristic features of every bridge and alley of Venice; in which, almost hourly, nature knows how to form groups of a picturesqueness far transcending anything ever achieved by the most gifted artist.

Poets and painters have indeed alike sinned against Venice for many a long day, in that they have looked upon her as the stage of mighty dramas and the inspirer of gloomy ballads, rather than the home-like town she really is, rich in the local colouring alike of her animate and inanimate features, and with qualities appealing to the heart quite as much as to the intellect.

Many able Italian critics—including Boito, who, though well known as an architect, is not so famous as he deserves to be as a writer—are of opinion that artists of the present day do not sufficiently study the women of Venice, and our



VENETIAN WOMEN OF THE CALLE DEL VENTO.

own experience leads us rather to agree with this. Venezia has two totally distinct types of women: the rosy-fleshed Venus-like form rendered so familiar to us in the paintings of Giorgione and Titian, and the slender yet muscular brunette, who has hitherto been too much neglected.

Boito describes these two kinds of beauty typical of Venice with considerable skill. The first has the light reddish-brown hair of the tint known as Venetian, with which are generally associated sea-green or azure-blue eyes and a snow-white bosom; a pathetic material beauty full of latent poetry. The second type varies more, but its usual characteristics are raven-black hair, great dark eyes with light-blue shadows beneath their lids, a finely arched nose, small lips, and a pale complexion with a *souçon* of a greenish shade. If the owner of all these charms also has good teeth, the latter type of beauty is very fascinating, for there is something of an underlying fire about it, and it is greatly enhanced when it is animated by smiles, expressive glances and words. Moreover, there is about this loveliness a certain undercurrent of melancholy, of a resignation so unassumed and inherent as to take from passion all that could seem to connect it with sin.

Love seems to spring in Venice from the splash of the waves in the lagoons and from the soft cadences of the dialect of the people. In Venice, love is not of the intellect, as in Paris, or of the senses, as at Naples or Madrid; it is simply fatal.

Now for a word on the way the women of Venice hold themselves and walk. Perhaps their wonderful carriage is merely the result of the handkerchief they generally wear folded across their neck, or more often flung over their heads, kept in place without fastenings of any kind, but just held together at the throat with one hand. This drapery leaves the hips quite free, of course. Or



A WATER-CARRIER (BIGOLANTE).

perhaps something is due to the constant climbing down of the sloping bridges, when the figure stoops a little, though the shoulders are thrown back, whilst the dress spreads out over the steps in a kind of crescent ; or maybe it is the result of the necessity for walking slowly in the narrow lanes, or from the fact that the bodice, which cramps the movements of the figure and robs it of grace, is not worn. It is noticeable that men as well as women walk in a much more natural way in Venice than elsewhere.

These peculiar types are of very great importance to the general effect of any Venetian scene, and must therefore be taken fully into account in any study of the local colouring of the place. They do not exactly give the whole scheme of colour, but they do give the tone to every picture which can truly be styled Venetian, and in which the tints are properly blended.

Quite apart too from the natural local colouring in the artistic sense, the Venetians have always had a special predilection for bright hues. They were, for example, so fond of turquoise blue, that the Romans used to call them the "Turchini."

Here may be said to meet in one wild maddening revel of colour the peculiarities of Byzantine, Arabic, Moorish, German, and Flemish art. Perfect dignity, wedded to voluptuousness, gave to Venetian art that distinctive stamp which appeals so powerfully to the imagination. In the City of the Lagoons art is alike luxuriant and restrained, and in this lies the secret of its magic charm.





Venice in the Spring.

"From out the ancient ruins life
springs forth anew."

It is the middle of March, and the air is soft and fragrant. Behind San Barnaba, in a peaceful Rio Terra, from whence comes the home-like sound of the lowing of cattle—for there some twenty fine Alpine heifers lead a quiet, dream-like and secluded life—the first almond tree is in flower. A cluster of tender pink blossoms announces the fact that spring has come.

The water in the canals assumes a deeper green colour; the keels of the gondolas seem brighter; and on the damp decaying walls of the canals, beneath the bridges, gleam the changing hues of all manner of mosses and algæ.

Flower sellers, girls and boys, from the adjacent islands carry baskets full of lovely spring blossoms about the town, and so low is the price they ask for their wares, that the most indigent is not too poor to be able to deck his home with one bunch at least.

The sky is of the palest blue, and the old-world Campanile of San Barnaba, an elder brother of the more celebrated Tower of San Marco, stands out in sharp relief against the clear background. On the church which adorns the bright Campiello, and which has, alas, been robbed of much of its smooth, almost mirror-like marble facings, hangs a great bunch of tastily arranged flowers. It is the day of the second annual fête of the Virgin, the occasion when all the charming and interesting ceremonies connected with the worship of the Madonna are gone through.

Young people look upon it very much more in the light of a secular than a religious festival, and the effect of the whole is thoroughly artistic, so perfectly does everything harmonise with all the spring-like surroundings.

Here and there we see some Venetian beauty in clattering wooden shoes and short petticoats, with her hair curled in the style of Titian's women, hastening to the church or to meet her *giovine*. The *giovine*, though his name means young fellow, may really be quite old, for the title applies in Venice rather to his position in life than to his age. The *giovine* wears his cap well on one side over his ear, and his dark blue sleeveless cloak with its bronze clasps, dating from the time of the Carbonari, flung gracefully over his shoulder, as he strolls along with the easy grace habitual to him.

Through lanes and alleys, now widening, now narrowing, some dirty and dark, some with many queer old corners, and for that very reason full of subtle charm, but one and all crowded with merry, laughing, shouting, and gesticulating holiday-makers, we push on, to reach at last the very centre of attraction, where all the most picturesque figures are collected together.

Alas for the rich! who, as a rule, know not the joy of loitering along in the narrow poverty-stricken lanes, laughing and talking in the mere joy of living, with no other aim than to enjoy the bright spring sunshine.

The wants of the people we see here are so few that there is no room for envy. The shining white teeth crunch up the simple roast chestnuts as mercilessly and with as much gusto as if they were the daintiest food, and the bright eyes gleam eagerly as they watch the cooking of the *folpi caldi*, from which most people turn away in disgust, so that we really feel that thoroughly to enjoy the every-day life of the Venetians we ought to have been born on the lagoons.

The life on the arms of this giant octopus—for such are really the by-canals and alleys of Venice—in this atmosphere of bromine and iodine, is a quite peculiar life, one for which the surroundings are responsible, and which could not be led anywhere but here.

An impression is made that for many centuries no changes have taken place, nothing has been renewed. The people in their antiquated, weather-beaten clothes, the houses, the shops with their primitive method of lighting, even the wares themselves, belong to long past times. It is a picture of stagnation in the midst of movement, which has a strange, unnatural effect in its harsh contrast with the noisy hurried life of other places and their ceaseless roll of wheels.

The crowd passes singing and chattering in twos and threes through the narrow alleys. Every moment there is a block, but yet no pressing or pushing. Everyone has plenty of time. The way leads past frizzling pans of frying fish decked with bunches of green parsley. Small baked fish and crabs are heaped up in pyramids at noon and at evening, separated from the street only by a low grating; between the heaps are huge steaming loaves of bright yellow polenta with its hissing boiling oil. Towards evening fruiterers and greengrocers arrange with enticing Southern art, under the attractive glimmer of coloured lamps, the salads, boiled carrots, potatoes, beans, baked artichokes and pumpkins, asparagus, and strawberries, which the islands of the lagoons furnish in such bounteous plenty.



CORTILE DI SAN ROCCO.

The inevitable leech shop, Sunday hair-cutting saloons, the miniature café, and the wine shop with its red lamp are not wanting even in the most out-of-the-way street.

And on we go through Campi and Campielli, with their singularly beautiful churches, up and down over the bridges, always the same thing over again, and yet quite a different picture each time. At length the old-fashioned, worm-eaten little shops along the fondamenta seem to die out, the alleys become narrower, the houses higher. We are now in the lower quarters of Venice, and have to squeeze our way through sometimes as if through clefts in a rock. The street is continually curving round into some fresh hiding-place, now to the right, now to the left, and anon to the right again. Another little alley, another and yet another; our head begins to swim with them all.

The figures wrapped in Carbonari cloaks become more numerous, the "zoccoli" patter in greater numbers, and the steps of the passers-by are more of a shuffle, the further we get from the centre of the town. The houses lean over so much in places that a Leander might easily clasp his Hero in his arms in the air from the opposite window. At last the view is clearer, the houses recede, and we have reached the Grand Canal at the Salute from the back. Here the whole glory of Venice suddenly unrolls itself. Her unexampled and indescribably noble row of palaces, like a chain of jewels, each one a masterpiece of architecture and a historical relic, lies open to the stranger's gaze.

Venice seen in the sunshine of spring, or Venice viewed by moonlight, is and will always remain, so long as one stone is left standing upon another, a fairy tale woven with glorious colour.

Firmly though the stones are jointed together, hard though the marble of which Venice is built, proudly though her mosaics glitter, rich though the sculptures which adorn the fronts of her churches and palaces, the old lagoon city still has about her a misty, airy, indescribable something calling to mind a glorious Fata Morgana, which we dread every instant to see disappear with all its unequalled blaze of colour.

In Venice the seared stone becomes a song, a musical inspiration. The union with the water has conferred upon it something transparent, soft, pliant.

The buildings of Venice, which should never be viewed in their individual aspect, the powerful impression which they produce being dependent upon the general effect and surroundings, change their form like a living organism with every hour. This cannot be often enough emphasized, and therein lies, perhaps, the great secret of this magic city. The effects of light and shade in Venice are unique, as are their causes. The combination of the many salts which rise in vapours, the brooding sultriness which hangs over its waters, the watery atmosphere brought out by the rays of the hot sun, the sea-weeds and grasses to which that sun has given life, the fresh sea breeze which occasionally blows from the Istrian shore in spring, the snow-capped Vizentine mountains, which even in March retain their white covering, and the hundred emerald islands of the Venetian Archipelago, all are potent factors. And all this it is, combined with the unique, manifold, oft-times sung and pictured palaces lining its Canale Grande, the finest water-way in the whole world, which produces the magic impression.

A walk through the labyrinth of streets in Venice serves to make one understand the power of attraction exercised on every artistic spirit by the City of the

Lagoons, for it is then that the veil of mystery, of strangeness, which even to this day spreads over the Queen of the Adriatic is felt most powerfully.

There are entire Sestieri, which are only exceptionally frequented by tourists; and that only when happy chance has led them to discover some architectural beauty going to ruin in the modest seclusion of some out-of-the-way corner; its immunity due to the fact that it has not been pointed out by any guide book. Even then one might wager that the artistic-minded traveller will content

himself by visiting such unfrequented places in his gondola, although it is just those explorations on foot which, in Venice, repay so amply, and are of such manifold interest.

There is so much life, so much bustle crowded up in the incredibly narrow space! Something so homely, and which gives so great an insight into the former manners and customs of the people in such a ramble! And with it, what wealth of colour, what effects of light and shade, what a collection of wondrous scenes and pictures are to be met with on these water-edged fondamenta; upon these bridges, large and small, where for the most part the sun only peeps out stealthily, in order to impress its indescribable play of colour upon the damp walls.

Then ever and again, in between, one of those dreamy, sun-bathed Campielli, with its ancient and artistically precious draw-wells and its grass-grown paving stones. Every one of these open spaces, usually adorned by a church or chapel in which Venice so abounds, offers a grateful resting-place after the ant-like hurry and bustle of the densely peopled pathways, made, as they are, by the inhabitants of those streets, the scene of their household occupations.

Of unspeakable charm, especially in spring, are countless little private gardens in Venice, which, thanks to the moist air and absence of dust, display a luscious green and luxuriate in an absolutely amazing wealth of vegetation. Not only great



PALAZZO CONTARINI-CORFÙ.

palaces have their gardens; but also the humblest, least prepossessing of the houses on the other side the Canale Grande, where Venice still retains a portion of Arcadia. Little houses inhabited by one family only, and that family in the most modest of circumstances, have their gardens where dark laurels flourish, the bright colours of pomegranate blossoms delight the eye, the oleander displays its countless buds of white and red, the myrtle is indigenous, and all kinds of creeping plants, rich in blue and mauve clusters, for the most part wistarias, rival the luxuriant growth of the vine, and together with it cover the grey old walls with their wealth of verdure, or hang their tendrils yearningly down to the water.

The charm of a Venetian garden lies in its inseparable melancholy; trees and shrubs reflect themselves with such pathetic sadness in the still lagoon, as though mourning at having been transplanted from solid earth to embellish the ghost-like island city. For if, in its forked side alleys, Venice can be likened by day and night to a moving ant-heap, so may its endless canals, especially when seen in dead of night, be likened to the silent streams of an enchanted island, and all upon it to shadow forms.

How spectre-like glide the black gondolas one after another upon the mirror-like surface of the waters. The darkness deepens; the moon has not yet risen. The red lights, which at night are hung behind the bare prow of the gondolas, throw quaintly fantastic shadows before them.

Hark! The evening bells of the numerous churches begin their harmonious concert, calling the pious, even at this late hour, to prayer. Amidst them, too, is heard the sound of song. It comes from a choir of men, their powerful voices pouring forth strains of joy and sadness into the balmy night.

The moon sheds its sea of light upon the motionless lagoon, and presses its silvery kiss upon the fine old buildings, which, awakening to life again, tell with silent eloquence of the glories of days long past, and of the joys and sorrows of families long extinct.



THE LAGOON BY MOONLIGHT.



A FUNERAL PROCESSION.

“From the Portfolio of a Collector.”

“I am a collector: and what I collect are the characteristics of every city through which I pass, whereby my trunk remains light, my purse heavy, whilst I learn what is to be found in no printed volume. Every city has its page; and passing through many cities I collect many pages, and these, bound together, make a book.”

Here is a page from the book; its title, “Venice.”

Venice is known as the City of Colour. And so it is. I always judge from details. In every other town I have been accustomed to see pall-bearers draped in black and followers clad in black, who, at least, gave the impression of being sorrowful. Here a funeral procession looks more as if it belonged to a wedding. The grave-diggers are got up in scarlet cowls, the officiating priests and acolytes are gorgeous in purple vestments, and the representatives of the various brotherhoods and communities display garments of turquoise blue and parrot green. The youths bearing the wax lights amuse themselves by making balls out of the melting wax with which they pelt each other, or by imprinting a kind of mosaic upon the windows of the gondolas with the gutterings of the candles. The coffin is covered with a bright-hued pall, and all assisting at the ceremony display a cheerfulness strangely in contrast to the occasion.

As we are on the topic of death, let us not omit to mention the apothecaries. The people, with their ready wit, give them no other name than that of *sparagna*

lumi—light savers. Their shops are a kind of debating society, and serve as a place of meeting to the educated classes, especially the learned men of Venice, who are glad to kill time cheaply without dipping into their pockets. With an endurance worthy of the highest admiration do these heroes sit in winter, with up-turned collars, braving the terrific draught blowing through the two opposite doors, which invariably stand wide open, as they suck the knobs of their canes, and breathe in the aromatic, sickly atmosphere of drugs.

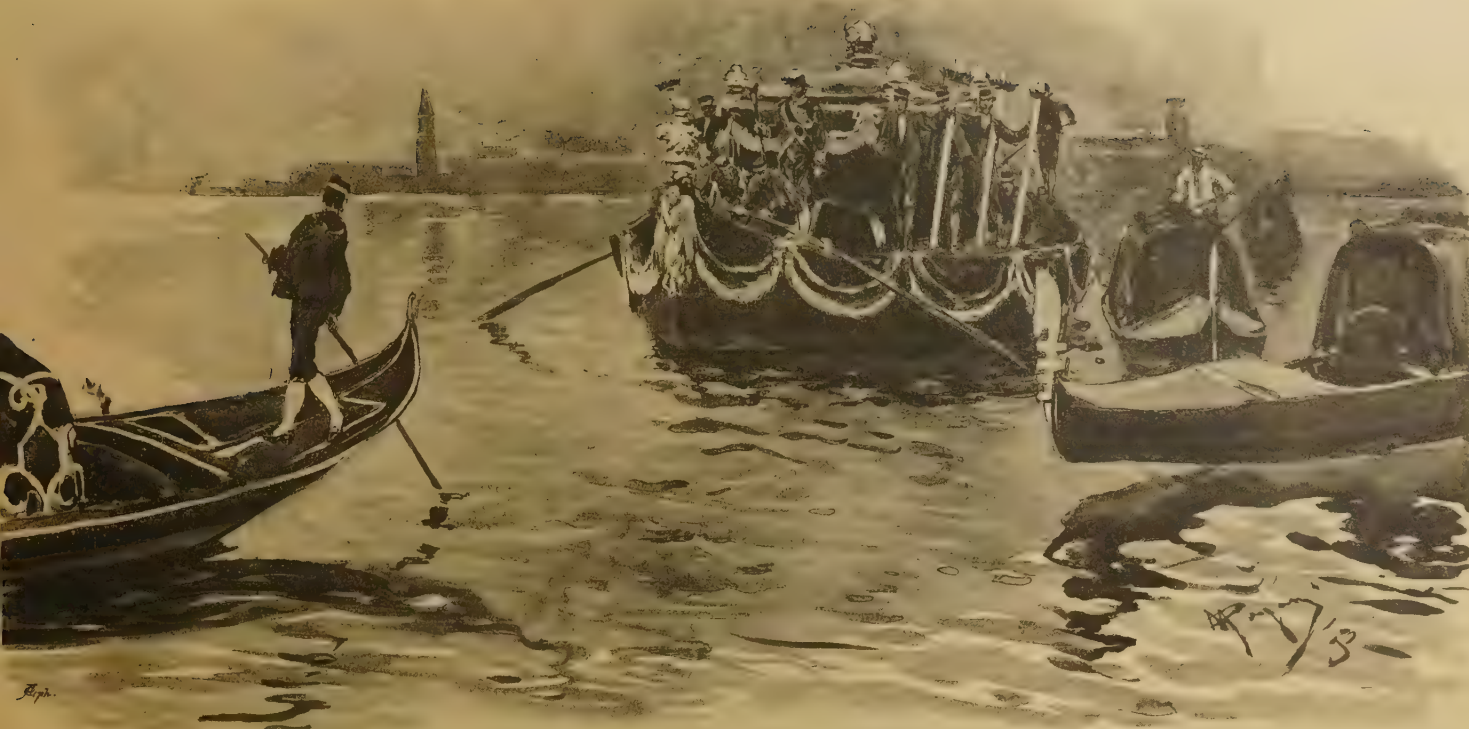
The female water-carriers—*bigolanti*—are another peculiarity, and are world-known, as every, even not Italian-speaking, individual knows. Such as have not seen them tripping along the Piazza di San Marco, in among the pigeons, is at least familiar with them from water-colour sketches. The male equivalent for *bigolanti*, the wingless mercury of Venice—to prevent mistakes we will prosaically call him the postman—has remained unknown, although he is an equally original feature. He wears a short cloak, which he drapes artistically about him, and he is the one man in all Venice of firm and rapid tread. Indeed, he flies through the labyrinth of alleys, his mantle fluttering behind him like that of Asmodeus, and rings so violently at the shut street doors that the peal echoes afar off. Thereupon a window will open in one of the upper stories, a grizzled female head look out, and a hand belonging to it lower a little basket by a string, which comes bobbing down until it reaches the postman, who confidently lays therein the correspondence; then pursues his headlong flight in the happy consciousness of duty done. At Easter-time he appears in company of a colleague bearing a basket, whose presence is perfectly understood by his clients—his object being to collect eggs, whether laid or artificial is immaterial to him.

The Republic is a thing of the past; not every nobleman now has his chance of being elected Doge; but certain less worthy personages have managed for generations past to keep to themselves a monopoly by which they contrive to earn an honest penny. Every prominent personage who can lay claim to any distinction, and every child of well-to-do parents, who may have passed his school examination successfully, is greeted with a blast from the trumpet of the Monopolist, a grey-bearded old fellow, whose comings and goings are announced by an old battered military trumpet. This flourish on the trumpet, given with a will, is followed by sundry well-chosen words, and *Evvivas*, which are rewarded according to the means and humour of the individual thus distinguished. This act of recognition in the public streets rejoices old and young alike, and the Monopolist leads a life free from care and—taxes, although he has his hands full of work, he being the only man in Venice who blows the Trumpet of Fame.

This original may be looked upon as a worthy counterpart to the Improvisatore, who spins verses by the yard in the "Giardini Publici."



A POSTMAN.



FUNERAL PROCESSION ON THE WATER.

For two centesimi per head he leads a devout audience through a series of personal adventures by land and water, which throw the not exactly tame adventures of Jules Verne completely in the shade. The authorities recently judged it advisable, in the interests of their solitary grassy space, which was suffering so greatly from the enthusiasm of his audience, to refuse the inventive romance-teller admittance to the public gardens. The cunning Improvisatore eluded the edict by giving his improvisations mounted on the railing of the grounds. He, too, rejoices in a sunny existence, free from care.

The bronzed water-lares, which ornament the gondolas, are condemned to deepest obscurity during the winter season. In vain does the eye seek for the favourite sea-nymph, the rollicking couple of dolphins, the winged lions, which belong as completely to a properly constructed gondola as does the harness to a team of horses. The gondolier, indeed, often finds himself constrained to apologise for the absence of his gilded tutelary spirits, but their temporary place of abode he never betrays; although it is an open secret that they are enjoying their winter sleep in a pawn-shop.

The calling of a gondolier seems to bring curious possibilities in its train. That it should invite to poetry is evident enough, but that it should produce men of letters and philosophers is more startling. The philosophers I only know from hearsay; with the men of letters, however, I have had some personal acquaintance. As example, I will cite a certain Antonio Maschio, a man who, while guiding his gondola, has managed to combine the study of Dante. The circumstances of his life have had something Odyssean in them. Worthy Maschio, who first saw the light in Murano, lived for many years without having made acquaintance with Dante, or indeed any other great philosophic poet. His father carried on a



A TOMBOLA.

small business as corn factor, in which his son assisted him by sorting leaves from ears of maize, used in Italy to make the famous straw sacks, for which the leaves have to be day by day worked perfectly flat, a process called feathering. This kind of occupation may have left the ardent youth time for other thoughts. As fate would have it, a sonnet of Petrarch's and some stanzas of Ariosto and Tasso chanced to fall into the hands of our young Maschio. From that time the young plebeian's thirst for knowledge was not to be satisfied. The leaves of Turkish corn, which had helped his father to attain to a moderate competence, interested him no longer, and only those leaflets covered with Gutenberg's characters henceforth claimed his attention. He who seeketh, findeth; to him who knocks, it shall be opened. To the fragments from Tasso and Ariosto was now added the Purgatory of Dante. As may readily be conceived, the student understood not one word of its contents, yet, none the less, he devoured it eagerly. The disorder, which at that time existed in Maschio's undoubtedly gifted brains, has, unfortunately, not been described by any chronicler. Certain it is, that it was not slight. At last his better nature seems to have gained the victory, for he came out of this incubation period, not only with normal mental powers, but with practical good sense betook himself to Venice, there to exchange his former trade for that of the poetical calling of gondolier. As the result has proved, he hit the mark, for it gave him time and leisure to add to his study of "Purgatory" that of the "Inferno" and "Paradiso."

From his close acquaintance with this mystic triad, there gradually developed in him positive knowledge. As the caterpillar develops into a butterfly, so did



A PEOPLE'S BALL.



A VENETIAN STREET SINGER.

the simple Antonio Maschio, not indeed in a night, but in the course of a few years; become a true and exact student and exponent of Dante. His criticism was of the greater interest that it was original, and not founded upon the opinions of any of his predecessors.

When a man concentrates all his power of thought upon one special subject, he is sure to attain to eminence. Maschio had but one thought, and that was to interpret Dante. And so at last he came to read the hieroglyphical verses of the great Florentine as though they were an open primer.

Then came the year 1865, when the five hundredth jubilee of Dante was to be celebrated in Florence. The gondolier must not be absent; but where to obtain the means to enable him to reach the town on the Arno? Everything he planned to that end fell through. Making a hasty resolve, he vowed, like a pilgrim to the Holy Land, to make

his way thither. But, alas! the poor fellow had not taken into account the political difficulties of the period. *Gens-d'armes*, probably taking him for a conspirator, arrested him at the mouth of the Po because his papers were not found to be in order. Active Antonio, checked in his plans, defied the emissaries of authority. With a bundle of necessities slung on his back, and a thick edition of Dante attached to the nape of his neck, he confided himself to the treacherous waters of the Po. The consequences of this *salto mortale* were the loss of his belongings, and, moreover, the going to the bottom of his ponderous Dante. A struggle for life or death with the uncertain waves brought the plucky swimmer to the Roman shore, where his lamentable plight induced the Italian police to hand him back to his native authorities.

So ended the dream of our poor Maschio's life—the hope of being present at the Dante jubilee. Twelve years seem to have passed before the indefatigable old man was granted the privilege of seeing the earnest study of a lifetime given forth for the judgment of the world. In the winter of 1878 the grey-headed scholar had so far succeeded as to be enabled to leave the steering of his frail bark to his now grown-up son, and to take his place in the best society of Venice as an acknowledged exponent of Dante. His readings obtained him unanimous approval; and, after that, in all the great towns of Italy, whither his fame preceded him, he acquired gold and laurels.

A new Goldoni, also, has arisen to the Venetians, of whom other countries know next to nothing, although, for two decades past, he has achieved the greatest triumphs in his fatherland—Giacinto Gallina, who writes in the Venetian dialect, and who possesses every attribute of Carlo Goldoni, with the sole difference that he is distinguished by a depth of feeling never dreamed of by the famous author of the two hundred and sixty-five comedies. In all else Gallina is equal to Goldoni, and is like him an adept in taking off to a nicety, the while with pleasant humorous colouring, the home life of his native city. It is greatly to be deplored



THE CAMPO S. MARGHERITA : HANGING OUT THE WASHING.

that poems written in dialect are so difficult of translation into other languages, and are therefore, for the most part, restricted to their own countries. Gallina has managed to put on the boards every idiosyncrasy of Venetian life with a fidelity quite touching, even to the characteristic "flittings" of the poor.

The gondola glides up to the house ; the old-fashioned, worm-eaten furniture, trophies of regattas, and other rubbish, are stowed away, one after the other, into the poetic bark, which then pursues its way along the deserted canal, to the next tumble-down building. The mother has thrown a black shawl over her head—a true Venetian woman never goes abroad without a shawl over her head—and, pressing her youngest child to her breast, sits thoughtfully on the narrow bench outside the "felze." A couple of her elder offspring cower at her feet, and guard certain holy images, which, looked upon as the most important and precious items of the freight, have been piously placed under their care.

There is merry-making going on to-day in the vicinity of Campo Marte, the whilom so beloved recreation ground of the Venetian people, now, alas ! so sadly curtailed by the erection of the great cotton factory. Its warlike name, certainly, no longer expresses the use to which the former exercise ground is now put ; for what goes on there now, with the exception of the cross-fire of amorous eyes, is of a very peaceful nature. Mine host, who dispenses the best of wine, sits on Sunday afternoons outside his own door during the crowded people's promenade, and, in order to combine the agreeable with the useful, has himself shaved in presence of all. Two old crones, each provided with her bowl of hot porridge, who meet here, have, of course, a

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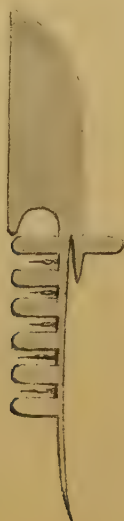
great deal to say to each other, and, accordingly, indulge in an endless gossip. To them appears a sympathising third, the friendly inmate of a neighbouring house, who brings out a chair for the elder of the two, that she may sit in the open, and pursue her gossip with more comfort. A dozen mothers of families come out, carrying each a table, the only one that their several households boast, and place them one against the other to form one large one, at which young and old of either sex take their places to play the inevitable Tombola (lottery), a harmless Sunday amusement, in which gains and losses will be settled with dried pumpkin seeds. Picturesque idlers form a living wall round them, and watch the proceedings with great interest, if they do not prefer *stanie pede* to squat on the ground, and improvise a game of their own at cards.

The greengrocer stands at his shop door, and hangs a bunch of onions upon a freshly gathered laurel branch.

A little girl sings national songs to an old guitar, miserably out of tune, straining her small voice to the most unwarrantable heights. Her father, who accompanies her, a well-fed man in the prime of life whom she supports by her singing, strokes his fine black beard with evident satisfaction.

Young couples wander hand in hand, looking with southern warmth into each other's eyes, which does not prevent a true Venetian woman, if she be but sixteen years old, to calculate to a nicety how much the three or four *lire* a day—earned by Tizio or Cajo at the Arsenal—come to in a month. Love is one thing, but to be able to eat one's polenta and fried fish in peace is another and not less important thing in life.

A girl of fifteen, born on the shores of the lagoons, accounts it the greatest disgrace if she possess no *amoroso*, for a girl must be made much of and petted; in the language of this country it is called *far a l'amore*. This leads to no light conduct, the love-making being most strictly overlooked by the relatives on either side, and almost without exception ending in marriage. Oh, Venetian girls are cunning and calculating little maidens!





THE PALAZZO PESARO.

Buildings on the Grand Canal.

"What I achieve with ease, I like not ;
What is hard to attain, I revel in."

Goethe.

He who, devoid of all sense of art, has never stood gazing admiringly upon the architecture of Venice must be struck with admiration, could he witness the incredible difficulties connected with the erection of every modern building, especially of those which rise direct out of the water. But one may pass years in Venice without ever witnessing so interesting a work, for any building new from its foundations and worthy of the name of architecture is scarcely undertaken in the present day. Indeed Venice possesses such a superabundance of monuments, private palaces, and houses which, but with little expenditure, can be adapted to the requirements of present times, that the need of new buildings will not be experienced for an incalculable time to come.

Add to which the ancient Venetians did not build upon sand, and their fairy-like creations, seemingly so delicate, their airy, often lace-like buildings, have defied centuries, and will endure through centuries to come. Fortunately for themselves, else had Venice long ceased to be an inhabitable city, and had played the part in modern times of another Pompeii, or French Carcassone—namely, that of a ruin. How could our generation, so full of hurry and bustle, and Venice above all things, which is now compelled to be so thrifty, contemplate for an instant undertaking, on the one hand, such a work of time, on the other, a work so costly, as would be the erection of new buildings in the City of Lagoons?

It takes month after month before the ground is sufficiently prepared even to drive the wooden piles into the sandy bottom of the lagoon. If a building of more pretension be in question, then a framework of oak has first to be laid upon great blocks of elm or larch, as a preparation for the actual foundation, or basis as it is called here, of the building. Sometimes, after all the labour, it is impossible to make good the foundation of the chosen site owing to the nature of the ground; and then what is to be done?

From authentic sources we learn that those portions of Venetian buildings not visible to the eye have cost as much, and sometimes even more, than the whole palazzo or church itself. As soon, however, as one begins to examine the costly stones of Venice in that light, we find no admiration, no praise, adequate to the sacrifice of time, money, circumspection, and perseverance, displayed by the ancestors of modern Venetians from the very beginning. Let anyone examine the Doges'

Palazzo, the Basilica of San Marco, the Campanile, which seems to ascend to the very skies, and then take into consideration what foundations must have been required on which to erect these glories of architecture.

But we will not make those mighty witnesses to Venetian architecture and Venetian wealth the subject of our consideration; let us rather glide straight along the Canale Grande, and we shall soon find examples to hand. The finest point of this unique water-way—this Broadway of Venice, as a New-Yorker in his over-weening national pride has christened the noble canal—is unquestionably that at which, looking right and left, we command the whole of the indescribably beautiful



THE PALAZZO GRIMANI.

Canal - Vedute. This point is reached at the moment the gondola, having passed Cà Foscari, reaches the cross canal, entitled *Volta del Canale*.

It was from that spot that Napoleon the Great loved to overlook the canal when he stepped on to the balcony of the Palazzo Balbi (now Palazzo Guggenheim), only separated from the Palazzo Foscari by that side canal above named, at the mouth of which our gondola has also taken up its position. The French Emperor did not need to be a strategist to be able to detect at the first glance that this was the most favourable point of all from which to overlook the interesting water-way, fringed on either side with its noble palaces.

That which the eye takes in at a glance, and the brush or pencil of an artist, even the skill of the photographer, is able to render with brilliant result, does not lend

itself to effective description. The general effect is not to be rendered in words, and if one goes into details it is to describe the special features of some particular palazzo, or the exquisite beauties of the winding water, which, at the Piazzetta, enters upon its canal bed, at Santa Chiara to lay aside its pompous name and to flow on modestly as a simple lagoon.

The Canalazzo—as the Venetian best likes to style the main canal—is tidal, and is fed by the sea at high tide. Then it is that the bountiful waters flow in from under the Ponte del Lido, to return, in like manner, when the tide goes down. The bed of the Canal seems only once to have run dry in the course of centuries, and that was on the occasion of one of the rare visitations of earthquake to which Venice has been subject, when, owing to the elasticity of its fundamental conditions, but little material damage was done. It was the terrific earthquake of the 25th of January, 1348, which swallowed up the waters of the Canale Grande, as by a miracle. For close upon a fortnight it seems to have remained dry, and the flow of the tide to have been interrupted.



THE PALAZZO CONTARINI-FASAN.



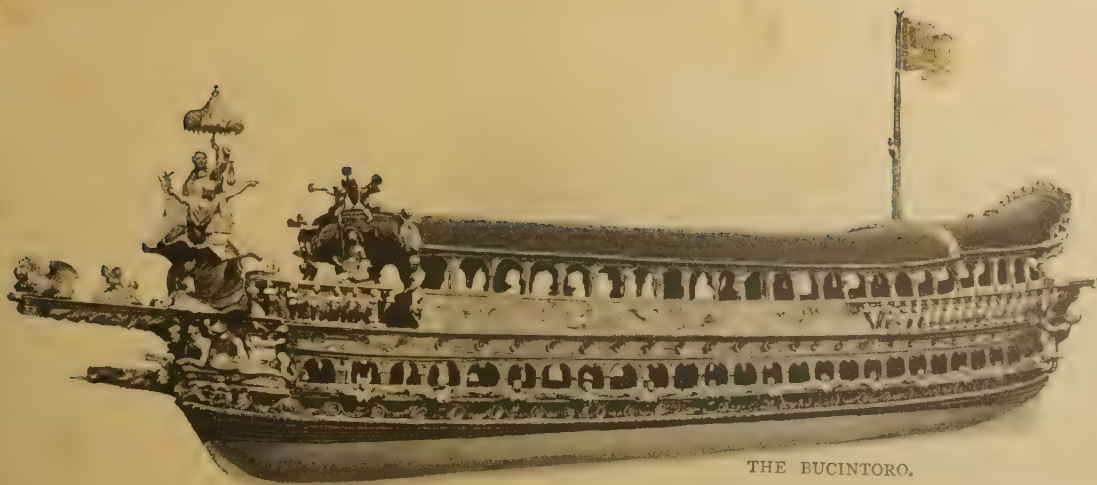
THE ABBAZIA SAN GREGORIO.

From this digression to return to our theme—the difficulties to be encountered in building in Venice—needs but a few strokes of the oar, and we find ourselves opposite to the regal dwelling, the Palazzo Grimani, that standing proof of our assertion. This noble piece of architecture, one of Sammicheli's master creations, dates from the middle of the sixteenth century; and its fine entrance hall is perhaps the most imposing of any to be met with in Venetian palaces. In the present day the most exquisite peculiarity of this Renaissance structure, with its Corinthian pillars, is, however, its colour, which years have changed into a reposeful iron-grey, giving the appearance of granite. It is a well-known fact that well-nigh invincible obstacles opposed themselves to

the construction of this pearl of architecture, for exactly on the very site chosen did the lagoon bed prove itself too unstable to admit of forming a sure foundation for the weight of stone work. But the plan was drawn out, the construction considered to be an accomplished fact, and here again, as in *Faust* (Part II.), it was: "What is hard to attain, I revel in." And it was attained. Six thousand—according to other accounts an even far greater number—



• THE PALAZZO CORNER DELLA CÀ GRANDE
(Now the Prefecture).



THE BUCINTORO.

of great larch stems were sunk as supports into the ever-receding mud bed, before the builders could feel confidence in its power to support the majestic structure. The cost of the preparatory labour must, therefore, have considerably exceeded that of the construction itself.

From an historical point of view, this splendid palace is also well worthy of notice. Marino Grimani, the successor of Doge Cicogna (elected Doge in 1595), married a Morosini, who—solitary instance in the history of Venice—was crowned Dogaressa. Before this palace was stationed the Bucintoro, the sumptuous gilded galley, rowed by two hundred men (hence the name Bucintoro, originally Ducentorum), which conveyed the wedded couple to the Palace of the Doges on their coronation.

It is at this point that the pure diamonds of Venetian structure rise from the water on both sides of the canal in close proximity to the no less bewitching, although less striking, pearls of its architecture.

Let us suppose our gondola to have turned off from the Volta del Canale, the point we called attention to for its *coup d'œil*, and to have glided past the Chiesa della Salute, then to have turned back the same way in order to impress upon our memory the most noteworthy buildings from the very beginning of the Canale Grande. There on the right, in the immediate vicinity of the Padiglione (pavilion in the Giardinetto Reale), we have the noble Palazzo Giustiniani, now the Hôtel de l'Europe, and close beside it the elegant Palazzo Emo. On the left stands the Chiesa della Salute, so exceptionally well placed, although the archives tell us that the position of the main entrance, apparently chosen with such circumspection, was merely the result of a lucky chance. Niccolo Contarini, the owner of the palace of that name opposite, ascended the ducal throne as Doge of Venice at the time when the Republic



THE CAMPIELLO SAN VIDAL
(Opposite the Accademia di Belle Arti).



THE PALAZZO CAVALLI-FRANCHETTI.

had decided upon the erection of the grand edifice. And it was the then ruler who desired to have the chief entrance to the House of God situated exactly opposite to the palace which bore his name. In the immediate vicinity of the Salute we perceive the episcopal seminary and the world-famed Abbazia di San Gregorio, side by side with a modern palace after the best Venetian style; and finally that costly jewel, the before-mentioned Contarini-Fasan, with Desdemona's celebrated balcony.

Here we find history and romance joining hands. A Venetian maiden of this house really was named Desdemona, and married a nobleman of the name of Moro, whose house we shall come across in our rambles through Venice. The episode of jealousy, with its fatal ending, portrayed in the drama, was also a true occurrence, only that Cristoforo Moro was no Moor. Moro was merely the family name of the jealous husband, who was Venetian Plenipotentiary to the island of Cyprus. A writer of the name of Giambattista Giraldi-Cintio wrote a romance in 1565, taking this family drama for its plot; it was reserved to the Englishman Rawdon Brown to trace the connection between the Italian story and the Shakespearian drama of *Othello*. Out of consideration to Venice and the family of Moro then living, the name Moro (black) had been converted by poetical licence into a negro, which caused the great British poet to make him a Moor.

We now have on the right the Palazzi Ferro and Corner della Cà Grande, which last is now the Prefecture, a work of architectural beauty, as much worth seeing for its courtyard and atrium as for the unexpected view over the Giudecca to the islands beyond, to be enjoyed from the balcony of the second story. This perfect



THE PALAZZO REZZONICO.

residence of a noble Venetian family, built in the most brilliant epoch of Venetian architecture, we owe to Jacopo Sansovino.

On the left the eye is arrested by the Palazzo Dario, especially prized for its coloured marbles; the Palazzo Manzoni, the house of the Società Vetri e Musaici, with its brilliant mosaics; the Moorish Da Moula; and finally the former Chiesa della Carità with the adjoining convent, which welcomed Pope Alexander III. within its walls when he landed in Venice in 1177 to sign the treaty of peace with the Emperor Barbarossa, after eighteen years of strife. The whilom Convent of Mercy is now the seat of the Academy of Fine Arts.

The chain of palaces, which would otherwise become oppressive to the observer, is pleasantly broken, every now and then, by a side canal, the end of a garden suddenly coming into sight, or a simple house, the gondola posts of which are ornamented with beautifully carved devils like the one on the left, near the Traghetto San Barbara.

On we glide, past those strangely interesting, though dumb witnesses to departed grandeur, such as the Palazzo Contarini dei Scrigni or Corfù, and the majestic Rezzonico, that wondrous combination of the Ionic-Doric and Corinthian styles of architecture, called by the people the Papà Rezzonico, because three members of the family Rezzonico sat upon the throne of St. Peter. The eye still lingers upon this magnificent and deliciously harmonious specimen of architecture, until the temptation to turn to fresh beauties assails the spectator. Two palaces on the left challenge attention, alike by their similarity and the perfection of their lines. They are the Palazzi Giustiniani. Originally there were three of that name.

U 2



Tony Grubb

THE CASA FALIERI AND CORTE DEL DUCA SFORZA
ON THE CANALE GRANDE.

It will not be superfluous to observe here that the same remark, with slight variation, might be made concerning many of the palaces. Thus, for instance, there are several Palazzi Mocenigo, Corner ; of Contarini alone there are four, as also of Grimani and Giustiniani, these great families having several branches, each of whom had its own residence.

Upon the opposite side, close by, we have the handsome Palazzo Cavalli (at present, Franchetti), one of the most brilliant pieces of architecture in Venice, built in 1370, and restored at enormous expenditure in 1878, when it came into possession of the Italian Rothschild. To artistic taste it is too new and glaring, especially as it forms such a striking contrast to its surroundings, grey with age. Its newness is undoubtedly a drawback, but one which every day will lessen. The Palazzo Cavalli was for years the property of the Duke of Bordeaux. At that time a leafy, shady garden belonged to it, since fallen a prey to the axe ; *en revanche*, it has been enriched by a staircase which may well be included among the things worth seeing in Venice, and is the work of the eminent architect and art critic, Camillo Boito.

In close vicinity to this imposing building the harmony of the canal is broken, not altogether agreeably, by the Ponto di Ferro, or iron bridge. It is somewhat over thirty years since this, certainly most useful, iron roadway first marred the symmetrical appearance of the enchanting water-way. Once more we see before us a whole line of buildings of intense interest, whether from their antiquity, or from their architectural worth.

Soon to the left appears the Palazzo dei Ambasciatori, or Ambassador's Palace, now in possession of the family of the renowned artist Roi ; formerly a sanctuary for all manner of miscreants, save those guilty of high treason. The Malipiero, Cozzi, Palazzo Grassi (now Sina-Wimpfen), the latter an imposing structure, but disfigured by its light colour wash, not suitable in Venice : formerly charming in its grey exterior, it now offends the eye of every artistic person. There follow a whole line of grand palaces, whose historical interest, alone, causes the visitor to the Canale Grande to approach them with reverence. To the right we have the Palazzo Moro-Lin and the exquisite Palazzo Contarini (1504), more in Bramante's style of architecture than in that of the



SAN SAMUELE, RAMO CORNER
(Land entrance to the Palazzi Mocenigo).

Lombardi. To the left, the world-renowned Foscari, so rich in colour, the most brilliant triumph of Venetian Gothic architecture. When Doge Foscari bought it from the Republic, he, with his love of splendour, had it raised one story that it might over-top all the neighbouring palaces. Seen from the land side, this building astonishes us by the crenellated walls with which it is surrounded, worthy of a royal fortified residence.

King Henry III. of France did, in fact, pass seven months in the Palazzo Foscari ; so did King Casimir of Poland ; and Kings of Hungary and Bohemia have also resided there. After the Ducal Palazzo, it was in the Palazzo Foscari that the greatest magnificence reigned, and where the most brilliant *fêtes* of Venice were held. The unfortunate Doge, after whom this palace is named, was a bosom friend of Henry IV. of France, and the same who had the unrivalled Porta della Carta erected, at his own cost, in the Doges' Palace. Francesco Foscari, whose son Giacomo was mercilessly condemned to the torture, when the Republic thought it had found an arch traitor in its chief, came of an ancient and illustrious house, which had already given more than one king to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, before the Foscheri had become Foscari. They are called the Stuarts of Venetian history. Paris Bordone, by whom comparatively so few pictures have been preserved, painted the walls of the apartments in the Palazzo Foscari. The last descendants of this powerful and renowned family were two ladies, mother and daughter, who died, in want and penury, in the first half of this century, in a garret of the great palace. A similar fate befel the former possessor of the Palazzo Balbi, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Situated at the corner of a side canal cutting across the Canale Grande, the Regatta prizes used to be given from Casa Balbi. Now the Committee announce their decision concerning the aquatic race from the contiguous Palazzo Foscari.

Worthy of passing mention are, on the left, the Renaissance structure Corner-Spinelli and the Palazzo Pisani, dating from the fifteenth century. Not far from these the Palazzo Barbarigo della Terrazza attracts attention by its broad stone terrace on the first story, from which a magnificent view is obtained. According to old writers, Tiziano Vecelli lived here a long time ; others ascribe its celebrity solely to Barbarigo's famous collection of pictures, he having been a great Art Macænus to whom Titian bequeathed a large number of his finest works. Titian's own dwelling-house stood not far from San Canciano, in a campiello called Biri Grando. A well-kept garden adorned the pretty house. When, a victim to the terrible visitation of the plague, he was carried off by death, Titian is known to have attained to his nine and ninetieth year, and was engaged upon an Entombment of Christ. The greatest sorrow of his life was the death of his beloved son and pupil Horatius. Pomponio, his second son, a priest of evil repute, out-lived his father and sold off everything without compunction, even to the little house in the Pieve di Cadore, where the great master had first seen the light.

Opposite to the Barbarigo della Terrazza are the three contiguous Mocenigo Palazzi, one of which is interesting from its association with Byron, who passed a portion of his stay in Venice within its walls. A memorial tablet commemorates this fact. The balcony was exactly the height from which the eccentric nobleman and skilful swimmer was accustomed to dive into the canal. Upon the palace steps Margarita Cogni watched through many a night, while her noble lover was engaged at one of the neighbouring palaces in exchanging a fire of wit with Madame Benzoni (died 1839).

Lord Byron and Madame Benzoni, the lovely biondetta—the heroine of the famous barcarole, *Biondetta in Gondola*, at that time so popular in Venice, who was transplanted by Georges Sand into France—had made each other's acquaintance



THE PALAZZO ALBRIZZI.

in the salons of the Palazzo Albrizzi ; at that period, and for long after, the Hôtel Rambouillet of Venice. They soon became friends. Madame Benzoni possessed a peculiarly lively and satirical spirit and great conversational powers, qualities excessively attractive to Byron. She was also the only person who had always the courage to tell the not too amiable Briton the unvarnished truth ; and from her he took every reprimand in good part. In the many biographies of the poet we hear little of Madame Benzoni, but there is no doubt that at one time she exercised considerable influence on her fickle admirer, to the grief and dismay of her humbler rival, about whom we know only the following meagre details.

Margarita Cogni, known as the Fornarina, was a young woman of the people, whom the poet, in company of a friend—many say Thomas Moore—saw one evening at the Brenta in Mira, as she was doing her washing on the bank of the river. From Byron's own description Margarita Cogni must have been a splendid specimen of a woman. Tall, well-formed, with magnificent hair and eyes, and dazzlingly white teeth, she had also a heart glowing with love for him. She made no concealment of

her love for Byron to her hectic and loutish husband, who was a baker's assistant. What amused the Highland bard principally at first, in this episode, was the wild jealousy of Margarita's hot-blooded and unbridled temperament. She would strike and bite her innamorato without hesitation; destroy or throw out of the window whatever came to hand; cry and scream so as to be heard several houses off; and even declared one day, in her original native dialect, that she would lead another army to Candia for his sake—a figure of speech which delighted Byron, because it exemplified his view of the Venetian people, and proved to him how an ignorant woman from among them could have the intelligence to take a vivid interest in the history of her country.

Naturally the spoiled favourite of the ladies soon wearied of a connection which threatened so despotic a mastery of his time and person. Byron's gondolier, Beppo, who outlived his master for many years, used to tell the most amusing tales of the two. The author of "Manfred" had a perfect menagerie of apes, birds, doves, and cats. These creatures were allowed to run loose, and to play any pranks they chose in their lord's apartments. Every evening, even when there was no company, the immense suite of apartments would be lighted up with wax lights. Byron was fond of light, and could only work in rooms absolutely blazing with it. All at once he would spring up, leave Margarita to the society of his four-footed companions, and command Beppo to row him far out to sea in the dark night, sometimes when the sea was raging or a storm blowing up.

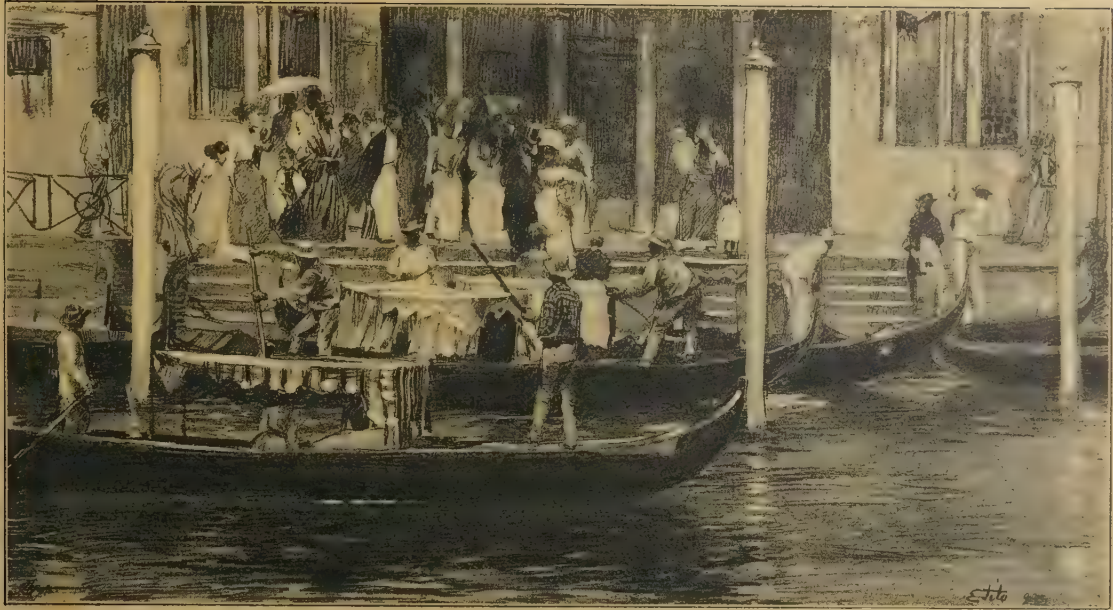
It was on one such occasion, when, despite the high waves, he had undertaken a swimming match in the Lido, that he was only saved by Margarita Cogni's spirit of self-sacrifice and energy. No sooner did she see the storm working up than, knowing Byron to be out on the Lido, and prompted by anxiety, she ordered the gondoliers to row out to the spot where she thought Byron would be. But they were not willing to risk their lives in the storm, especially as they were convinced that his lordship, being an incomparable swimmer, would have long since reached the sand hills. But Margarita obtained her own way. She scolded and cursed, threatened and implored, calling all manner of people to her aid,



THE PALAZZO TIEPOLO.



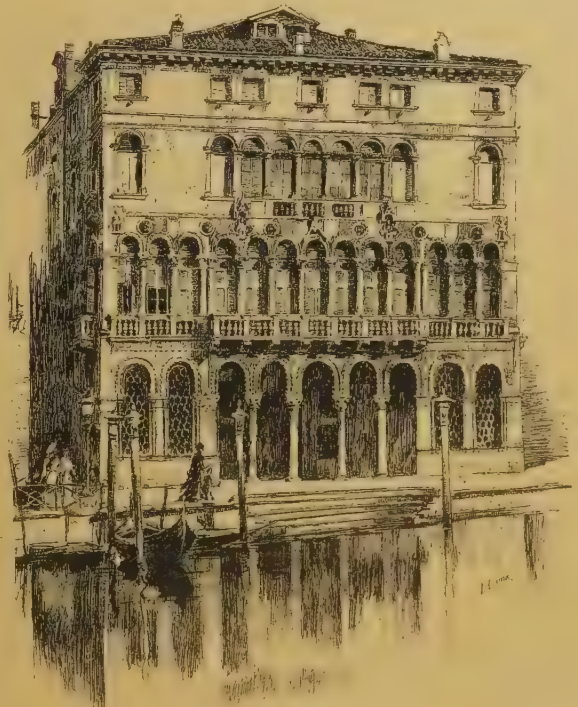
SMALL CHURCH NEAR SAN SAMUELE.



AN ARISTOCRATIC WEDDING PARTY LEAVING THE PALAZZO LOREDAN.

until the two boatmen were forced to decide on undertaking the perilous journey despite the storm. Margarita was the first to spring into the gondola. Heedless of forebodings, she would not be restrained from steering out to sea, where she still expected to find her lover. Her instinct had guided her well. Byron's strength already threatened to fail in the battle with the raging elements, and without the succour of his energetic Fornarina he must undoubtedly have been overtaken by the same fate to which Shelley fell a victim in Viareggio. It is sufficiently well known that Byron's gratitude towards those who loved him was never particularly long-lived, and in this case, where there was so great a chasm between the highest intellectual power and absolute ignorance, Byron's fickleness in love affairs made itself felt all the sooner. However, this connection, thanks to the tenderness of the loving woman, lasted with interruptions for two years.

Very amusing were the scenes when Byron sought to make Margarita understand that she could only be beautiful in her peasant's dress, with hair all rumpled, and wearing her long gold ear-rings and chains. This was beyond her power of comprehension, and ever and again she would appear before her lord on his return in some fashionable and would-be aristocratic dress. But he invariably flew into a violent temper on seeing her decked out in train and plumed hat. More than one expensive hat, purchased of one of



THE PALAZZO LOREDAN.

the first modistes of Venice, was hurled in a fit of anger out of the window into the canal; more than one dress, train and all, was torn in pieces.

Margarita Cogni, it may be mentioned, returned quietly after this episode to Mira, and to her accustomed way of life. She attained a great age, and showed traces of her former beauty to the last. She was always ready to speak of Byron, and liked to talk of him; she preserved a lasting and loving recollection of her *matto mylordo* (mad lord), as she called him.

With Byron's stay in Venice are associated many anecdotes and stories, and not a few are handed down among the people to this day. Thus, the story goes that Byron, although he professed an enthusiastic worship for Venice—so much so that he said for instance of Milan, which he had to pass through to get to Venice: "For those whose destination is Venice, Milan can be nothing more than a quarantine station"—had never set foot on the Piazza di San Marco, and had only seen it from the first floor of the Procurators' Palace. He was shy of letting his clump foot be seen in a city where his resemblance to Apollo had been so blazoned abroad. He was particularly fond of the Bridge of Sighs, going there at night and, they say, remaining for hours at a time. He had his riding horses on the Lido, whence he undertook long swimming excursions; every day he used to ride along the shore for an hour or two. His best lines were composed on horseback, and on reaching home he would write them down at once. In the garden of the Armenian convent, on the island San Lazzaro, the pages covered with his writing were collected long after his death and put under a glass case; the wind must have blown away many of them, for the careless poet often left them lying about in the garden. By a strange irony of fate, the Mechitarists of this old-world convent are more highly thought of on account of their hospitality to Byron than for their great services rendered to Armenian literature, by their careful printing of its classics and translations of original works by Philo, Eusebius, and others.

Byron's first choice of a dwelling in Venice proves how easily he was chained by beauty. A pair of beautiful dark eyes enticed him into the cramped quarters of the Frezzerie, where the casual stranger would be little likely to seek for lodgings. This time the eyes belonged to the wife of a wine-merchant, or, as others say, a fur-dealer. The dissipated nobleman lodged in the narrow alley with this couple, whose reputation was not of the best, and the result was that he became the lover of the black-eyed lady, who made him believe that she loved him inordinately. Her passion for ornaments knew no bounds, and the open-handed peer was always ready to fulfil the wishes of one who, as she never wearied of repeating, loved him so truly. Chance at length opened his eyes to the true nature of the fair one. It was not long since he had presented the lady with a costly piece of jewellery, and her jet-black eyes were already beginning to express her yearning for a new one. There were moments at that time when the usually well-filled purse of the extravagant epicurean was quite empty, and he was obliged to draw heavily on the credit which was readily accorded him in the City of Lagoons. A Venetian of good position, who had performed many services for Byron, sent to his house, at his request, a jeweller who dealt on credit. The jeweller exhibited to the distinguished Englishman one case after another, until he finally came to one at the sight of which Byron could not



THE FISH MARKET.

suppress a slight exclamation ; he examined the object most minutely, and found on the back of it a G and a B that he had himself scratched there. No doubt about it ; it was the necklace that he had himself given to his beloved, and on it were the initials of her name. The ornament, she had said, she had not dared to wear before her husband, but would treasure secretly to the end of her days. Byron bought it again, and presented it, with a sarcastic smile, to her whose power over him was now at an end.

One of the three Palazzi Mocenigo has, from the land side, an approach well worth seeing, easily reached on foot from San Samuele on passing through the arch in the Ramo Corner. Next to the Corte dell' Albero—at present a stopping-place of the water tramway, that is to say of the steamboats—stands a row of detached buildings on the Grand Canal, like the stars in Orion's belt. There is the Corner-Spinelli, the style and colouring of which are the delight of all connoisseurs, the Grimani already mentioned, and the inseparable Farsetti and Loredan Palazzi, both built in the Byzantine-Lombard style, and dating from the twelfth century. The most charming feature of the Farsetti is the peristyle, with columns surmounted by late Roman capitals ornamented with acanthus leaves, designed by Canova. Attached to it is the Loredan, with the same narrow round-arched colonnade, a true reproduction of the Arab style most prevalent in Venice in the eleventh century. The dark *patina*, with which the ennobling hand of time has coated it, enhances the effect which these two singularly beautiful palaces produce on the beholder. One of the greatest heroes of Venetian history, Dandolo Enrico, who took Constantinople in 1204, thereby costing a pasha his eyes, lived in the Loredan. The race of the

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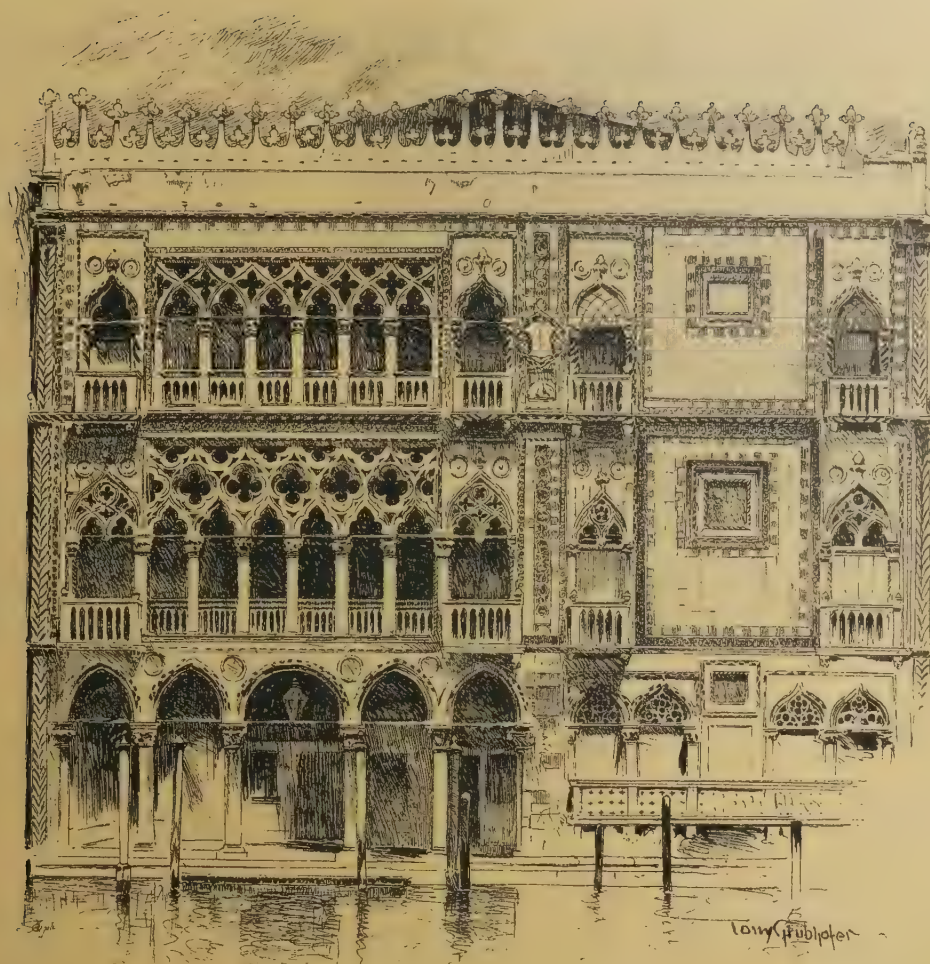
Dandolo supplied the Republic with no fewer than four doges, and survived up to the first half of our century, though now nothing remains of them but the name.

On the left the attention is arrested by a second Grimani Palazzo of the time of the Renaissance. Adjoining it is the pointed-arched Bernardo Palazzo, in the Byzantine-Lombard style of the Donà, the refined Byzantine style of the Tiepolo, which attract the eye of the passer-by; on either side succeeded by others through the boldly sweeping span of the Rialto bridge, past the Bembo and Manin Palazzi, from the windows of which Lodovico Manin, the last Doge of Venice, witnessed the fall of the Republic.

As soon as we emerge from the arch there are seen on either side extensive buildings of the middle ages, which even at a distance strike us as having been used for public purposes. These are the so-called Fabbriche di Rialto, distinguished as the Fabbriche Vecchie e Nuove. On the right hand amongst the former is the crenellated Fondaco dei Tedeschi, in olden times a magnificently decorated edifice, for the façade was adorned with frescoes by Giorgione, of which hardly a trace now remains. This truly mediæval structure dates back to the twelfth century, and was erected by the State for the use of the German merchants. The term "Teutonici" comprised, at that time, Bohemians, Hungarians and Poles. Members of these nationalities were allowed to store their goods there, and to look upon the eighty dwelling-rooms as their resting-place. Opposite on the fondamenta, which stretches away on the left from the foot of the Rialto bridge, stands the elegant early Renaissance structure called "il Palazzo dei Camerlenghi," now used as the Court of Appeal. The Camerlenghi were the officials of the State Exchequer during the Republic, the most competent men alone being selected for that office. Leaving this palace, our way leads us through an adjacent colonnade of some length to the "Pescheria," or fish-market. These buildings are called "le fabbriche nuove," because their origin dates from no further back than the year 1552. There is no reason to doubt that this colonnade was merely intended to serve as a basis for a structure of monumental proportions. Fra Gioconda had even drawn up an elaborate plan for it, but the war with the allies of the Liga of Cambray had drained the purse of the Republic, and it was deemed more prudent to abstain from the erection of a building so costly.

Just behind this colonnade, though not visible from the Grand Canal, stands the oldest church in Venice—San Giacomo di Rialto. It was begun as early as the year 421, and received additions in 1073, 1194, and 1601. San Pietro di Castello is also said to be the oldest church, and this would appear to be contradictory, but in reality it is not, for Castello on the Olivolo Island, not belonging to Venice at that time, would not be taken into account.

Still greater attention is demanded by the succeeding palaces, which are prominent alike in a historical and architectural sense. To the right, on the way to Corte and the Campiello Remer, that highly interesting spot which will be described further on, in "Rambles through Venice," we observe the projecting stair-way of a venerable pile in the Arabic-Byzantine style, known by the name of the "Antico Palazzo." This building affords examples of the unaltered arched Moorish window and of the relief known as *patera*. Further on we pass the Palazzi of Mangilli, Valmarana, Michiele dalle Colonne, and Sagredo. The last-named is



THE CÀ D'ORO.

remarkable for a majestic portico staircase, adorned with paintings by Pietro Longhi in 1734. Noble buildings in themselves, but spoiled for the connoisseur by the signs they show of the approaching decadence.

Radiant in its capricious beauty, self-conscious of its triumph, shines the Moorish pearl of the Grand Canal, the ethereal structure of the comparatively diminutive Cà d'Oro, rising like a fairy building from out the shifting water. In the presence of it one is at once imbued, as by the touch of a magician's wand, with the sense of the gorgeous yet ephemeral past of Venice. This unfinished palace, of which a whole wing is lacking, is the key to the surrounding "mysteries," as a witty art critic has christened its silent, dusky companions along the Grand Canal. The Cà d'Oro would seem to represent the feminine element amidst its marble comrades, the alluring rapture of existence, an existence in which the ideal and the real were blended into one. Such is the impression made on the imagination of this graceful structure. The palace owed its name of Casa d'Oro, contracted to Cà d'Oro, partly to the rich gildings which adorned it, but more especially to the fact that its original owner was a member of the Doro family.

In glaring contrast with the stone lace-work of the Cà d'Oro, which has been the theme of the inspired verse of more than one poet, stand the imposing Cornaro

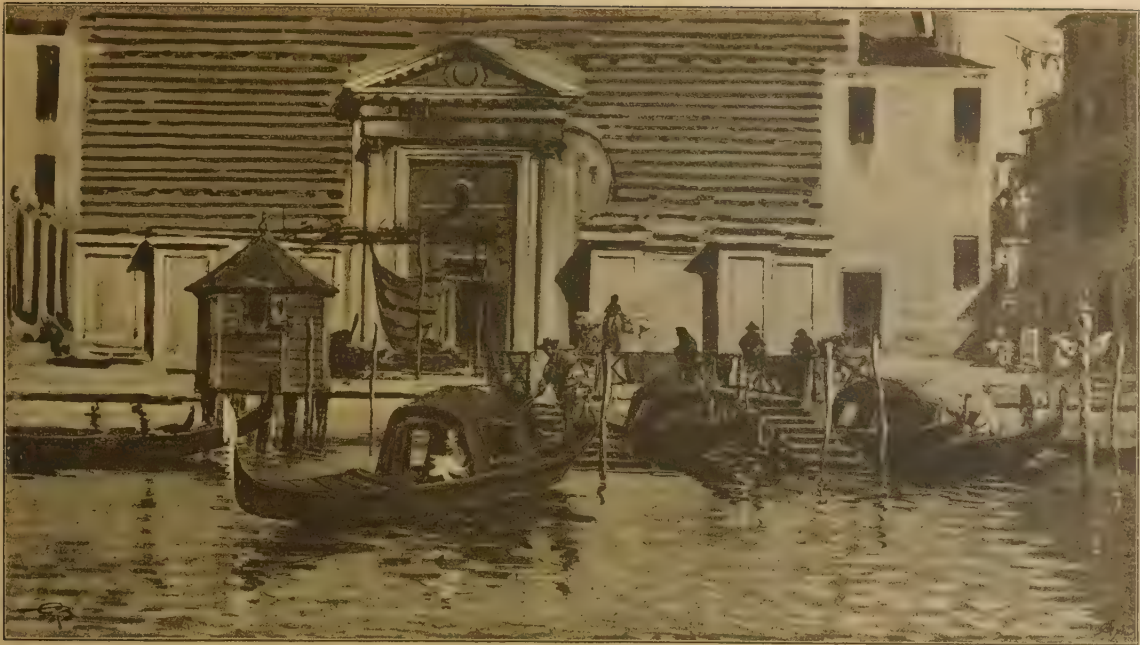
and Pesaro Palazzi in their massive beauty. The latter is a stately edifice of great magnificence, a most complete example of the Grotesque Renaissance style of Venice, and was built by Longhena Baldassare in 1679. This palace, designed from the first to surpass all its compeers in richness and princely splendour, was inaugurated on the occasion of the marriage ceremony of the procurator Pesaro, a wedding which, in accordance with the custom of the noble families of the time, swallowed up a fortune, and offered to Venice a spectacle of royal magnificence which was depicted by painters, and described in minute detail by contemporary chroniclers.

The owner of the Pesaro Palazzo was a descendant of Benedetto Pesaro, the general in command of the Venetian army, and also of Doge Giovanni Pesaro, whose fine monument adorns the Frari Church. Giovanni Pesaro, who in reality only occupied the presidential chair in the Doges' Palace rather over a year, yet rendered signal services to the Republic.

While we are speaking of the Frari Church, we may be allowed to linger there an instant to mention an altar-piece by Titian representing the Virgin Mary and the Child, with saints by their side, for which members of the Pesaro family sat, as was the custom at that time. It was actually a Pesaro, by name Jacopo, Bishop in Paphos in the Island of Cyprus, who commissioned Titian to paint this picture, fixing the price beforehand at the figure of ninety-six gold ducats for the picture itself, and six ducats for the canvas on which it was painted. It must be admitted that the artists of that time, with all their greatness, were modest in their demands, and that the people, with all their extravagance, were also capable of being thorough misers, as witness the ninety-six ducats. It is notorious, for instance, that on the occasion of great festivals, amongst which weddings stood in the first rank, the most costly glasses and majolicas were flung out of the windows into the canal. They might have given Titian a round hundred; but no, the four ducats more seemed too much.

It is but a step from the Pesaro to the Cornaro Palazzo, a majestic edifice in the Decadence style, borne on columns, and looking older than it really is on account of its grey colour. It is always an object of pleasure to those who interest themselves in gathering the flowers of the history of Venice, of which this page, dealing with Catarina Cornaro, the kindly Queen of Cyprus, is one. This is ostensibly the palace which was presented to Catarina by the Republic, when she was recalled from the throne of Cyprus; but a little poetic licence has found its way into this historical fact. As a matter of fact, in Catarina Cornaro's time there stood on this spot a far nobler and more ancient building, which the bad taste of the time of the Renaissance thought fit to destroy, to replace it in 1724 by the palace now standing, built by the architect Domenico Rossi, a pompous edifice indeed, but branded by the stamp of the decadence. It is thus only a feeble imitation for which the great majority of people entertain so lively an interest, imagining it to be the former residence of the favourite Queen of Cyprus.

On the left succeed the noteworthy little Church of San Staë, with the Tron and Battagia Palazzi; and on the right again a sixteenth century palace belonging to one of the many branches of the Grimani family, and finally the remarkable Erizzo Palazzo of the Cinquecento period. We may perhaps be allowed to run through *en bloc* these minor objects of interest—minor amidst this plethora of



THE TRAGHETTO OF SAN MARCUOLA, OPPOSITE THE MUSEO CIVICO.

wonders—in order to concentrate the attention of the spectator on the masterpieces which now crop up again, collected together in a small compass.

On the left a venerable building in Moorish taste, and now resplendent in a new coat of marble, the Fondaco dei Turchi, the sight of which transports one immediately to the East; it dates from the eleventh century—that is from a period when the Venetian fancy was still under the fresh impress of Oriental splendour and Oriental art, the result being that almost everything which originated beneath this influence bears the true Oriental stamp. Up to the year 1621 this Moorish and Romanesque-Byzantine building belonged to the Dukes of Ferrara, and at that time the Republic bought it and devoted the spacious palace to a shelter for Turkish merchants and their goods. The reason for the Oriental style is not, as is commonly supposed, that Turks lived there, but because the halls and vestibules being in the true Moorish style, the Republic, which petted the infidels in every way, located them there. The Fondaco dei Turchi has been splendidly restored in the present time, and raised to the position of city museum, is called the Museo Civico or Correr, after a patrician of that name who bequeathed to his parent city important art and historical collections.

Amongst the highly remarkable treasures with which the Museo Correr abounds we will mention two. To the stronger sex may be recommended a plan of Venice carved in wood, and dating from the fifteenth century, on which we look in vain for the Church of the Salute, the Redentore, the Campanile Tower, the Bridge of Sighs, the Zecca, and the stone bridge of the Rialto, and on which the houses in the Piazza di San Marco are still the same as those shown in Gian Bellini's picture in the Academy. This splendid wood carving, which reflects so accurately the physiognomy of Venice at that time, is from the hand of no less an artist than Albert Dürer. To the women folk we would point out the thick-soled clog boots, almost half a yard high, not unlike buskins of the ancients, which were worn by the Venetian ladies of rank of the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when in state robes,



THE PALAZZO VENDRAMIN.

supported on either side by a *spirito familiare*, they walked, we might almost say tottered, to church. This last assumption, however, we are assured by the most reliable chroniclers, is not founded on fact. On these boots half a yard high, the beauties of that time, who were thereby made to appear all more than life-size, majestic and imposing, stood as on a pedestal. Brocades worked with gold and silver thread, velvets and furs, jewels and feathers, which would have fairly buried a woman of average height, suited these colossal figures, which by this adventitious aid must have appeared to other mortals as beings of a higher order, as shadowy forms from fairyland.

It will be seen that in Venice, at the time of its greatest splendour, everything was ordered with a view to decorative effect, even the appearance of the women. Looking at these boots, we can understand the senseless height and breadth of the dwelling-rooms in most of the old palaces. A small woman would have looked a mere speck in such rooms, whilst a gorgeously arrayed Venetian lady, strutting about on stilts, might have been as tall a figure as her husband, as is seen in the old pictures. This fashion is also attributed to the mistrust, or rather the prudence, of the old Venetians, who sometimes remained away for long periods, and took all precautions before leaving. A woman with such a *chaussure* was helpless, and always dependent on the assistance of three or four servants; and to be hampered in one's movements is not conducive to the carrying through of secret adventures, love intrigues and so on. The wife only left the house on occasions of ceremony, and the cunning masters of households liked to surround every such occasion of leaving home with pomp and circumstance.

To leave this curious glimpse of old customs, and to return to the more genial sphere of art, we will next call attention to Longhi's pictures in the town museum of Venice. This painter of the eighteenth century, a contemporary



THE PALAZZO LABIA
WITH VIEW OF THE GHETTO.

of the Venetian comedy writer, Goldoni, and his portrait painter as well, in his own line quite as faithful a portrayer of the customs of the age in which he lived, not only delights us, but presents to us the home life of the time. We learn to understand this age of trifles; of powdered wigs, low-necked dresses worn in broad daylight, patches and buckle shoes. The Abbot, with faultless sleeves of lace, presenting a bouquet to the rouged beauty at her toilette table; the trim waiting-maid with the rose in her coquettishly-dressed but unpowdered hair, who, *décolletée* in her turn, is bringing the coffee or chocolate into the room; the nursery, showing us the children, who have already caught the contagion of the somewhat narrowing tastes of their elders, and are playing at shepherd and shepherdess amongst themselves; the harmless, though trivial gaiety, carelessness and self-importance of this little world of breathing marionettes—to such scenes Longhi gives a masterful expression. We smile at these little figures, but we wish them no ill, and in our inner consciousness perhaps we even envy them.

Now we come to a contrast in stone of this world of Sèvres China, to the Palazzo Vendramin Calergi, the most consistent, most harmonious in style, and, therefore, the most thoroughly satisfactory private residence of which Venice can boast. Andrea Loredan commissioned Pietro Lombardo, in 1481, to build him a palace which should be thoroughly consistent in style, and the great architect has here constructed his masterpiece. The smallest ornament on this building is true to the purity of the Renaissance style at its best, and is intrinsically in

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THE PONTE SAN GIOBBE, NEAR THE GHETTO.

unity with the whole. Even the layman is impressed with this mass of columns, which, although decorated with serpentine stone, porphyry and vert antique, is distinguished for the splendid severity of its lines and its classic simplicity. The windows are in the noblest taste, and are only found in equal beauty in the already mentioned Corner Spinelli, which, also in the early Renaissance style, combines with gloomy severity an elegance, toned down by time in such a manner as to fill the artist with enthusiasm. The palace, which figures now in the Almanach de Gotha of the Grand Canal as the Palazzo Vendramin Calergi, passed from its original owner Loredan to a Duke of Brunswick, ancestor of the famous Diamond Duke. In 1589 it was bought by Vittorio Calergi, head of a Cretan family, with whose extinction the palace passed to the Grimani, and finally to the Vendramins. Since then it has been known as the Vendramin Calergi, a name it still retains. One of the Vendramins sold it to the Duchess of Berry, when she settled in Venice, and the heirs and descendants of the Duchess are at present the owners of this noble pile, to which Richard Wagner, who spent the last months of his life and died there, has lent yet an added interest.

Beyond the Vendramin, on the right-hand side, the Palazzo Labia attracts our attention, on account of its gorgeous grounds and lavish ornamentation. This palace is, moreover, celebrated for the valuable frescoes of Gianbattista Tiepolo, the great artist of the seventeenth century, which decorate the chief hall. To connoisseurs the scenes, which represent Antony and Cleopatra in Venetian costume of the seventeenth century, are familiar from the numerous, more or less successful, reproductions which exist of these grand pieces of satirical painting. All sorts of anecdotes are still current among the people of the extravagance and the wealth of the Labia family. There is a story of one of them who was so fond of showing off his great wealth that, whenever there was a festival on the Grand Canal, he would stand at the window and throw gold with both hands into the water to dazzle the populace; at night, however, he used to draw in with his own hands a fine net, which he had had placed in position for the purpose, with the identical sum

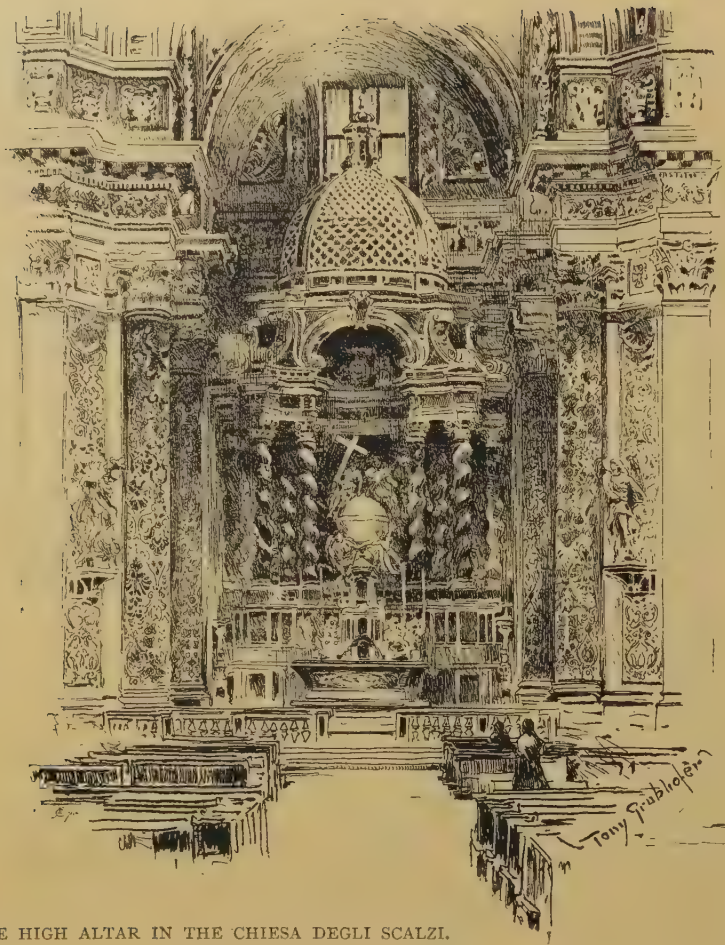


THE CHIESA DEGLI SCALZI, OR CHURCH OF THE BAREFOOTED FRIARS.

of gold in it. This traditional ostentation of the Labias has given rise among the people to the saying: "Che i gabia, ò no i gabia, i xe sempre Labia" ("Whether they have anything or nothing, they are always Labias").

From San Gèremia, where the pompous palace stands, facing on one side towards Cannaregio and on the other to the Grand Canal, a view is obtained of the lofty houses which belong to the Ghetto of Venice, or rather which themselves form the Ghetto. These may be quickly reached on foot by way of the Strada Nuova (or Via Vittorio Emanuele), leading to Cannaregio. The name Cannaregio (often wrongly written Canareggio) is said to have originated in the masses of reeds which in former times grew luxuriantly on the once marshy site. Such a place would be called in Italian Canneto (from canna, a reed), and so Cannaregio means nothing but "kingdom of reeds."

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THE HIGH ALTAR IN THE CHIESA DEGLI SCALZI.

As we are now in the Ghetto, let us cast a glance at the gloomy houses, overshadowing like mountains their surroundings, in which, contrary to all hygienic rules, the Republic condemned the Jews to dwell. To discuss how many of them have lived and suffered there, packed together in the narrow, towering houses, would take too long. And yet the Serenissima would not come badly out of the discussion; for his protection, once granted, during the long centuries was never withdrawn from the Jews, as it was by the Medici in Florence. At the opening of the thirteenth century Jewish refugees first began to seek and find protection with their families at the hands of the all-powerful Republic. The first-comers are said to have been exiles from Germany, and they were allowed to trade, although under severe restrictions. From the golden ship of state, which Venice became in the thirteenth century, there fell golden nails for the sharp, energetic Jews. The early settlers were soon joined by co-religionists from Asia Minor, and in 1492 and 1496 followed refugees from Spain and Portugal, who shared with the first-comers the very limited hospitality which the Venetian State accorded them. Then, indeed, it was that the narrowness of the space allotted them in that remote district of swamp and reeds began to make itself felt; and gradually they tried to make up in the height of their dwellings what was denied them in breadth.



The Jews were restricted from pursuing any "noble" calling in Venice; were obliged to wear a distinctive badge, easily visible, in order not to be mistaken for true believers; and had to submit to a magistrature specially appointed for them, and called the "Cattaver." They were not allowed to practise their religious rites, or only in secret, and were confined at nightfall to their island Cannaregio. For the rest, however, they were left unmolested, and were spared in Venice the insults, as well as other disagreeables, to which they were liable in other places. It was only at the end of the fifteenth century that the favourite fable of the sacrifice of children, of which the Jewish community was accused, suddenly sprang up. But the wisdom of the Senate soon saw through this calumny, and this heavy cloud passed away over the heads of the wretched people without annihilating their existence in Venice. What remains to-day of the Ghetto life is hardly worth mentioning.

The smells of oil and fat in the Jewish quarter are still more abominable than in the worst Christian cookshops, or *friggipisce*, and Hebrew signboards tell us that in them we can have *cucina fragiotta* (Jewish cooking) of the genuine kind. Old clothes dealers—whose shops entirely lack that artistic stamp which distinguishes the pawnbroker of Venice from others of his class—with Biblical beards, red-rimmed eyes, and greasy clothes, differ otherwise from their Christian colleagues only in their more pronounced so-called Roman noses, and in their rather more unwashed appearance. The Ghetto of to-day is but the symbol of ancient bondage and submissive endurance; and now, when no one need live there who does not wish, what

with its evil smells and dirty inhabitants, it can hardly be called even interesting, especially as it is dull and unpicturesque to a degree seldom found in Venice.

Our gondola turns, and we glide out again into the world of light and art, past the Church of San Geremia, celebrated for its splendid processions, and the Palazzo Flangini, which is said once to have been twice its present size, and to have been inherited by two brothers, one of whom was so enraged at not possessing the whole that he had his own half carried away, thus disfiguring the palace and rendering it useless. Arrived in front of the Church of the Barefoot Friars, with its over-lavish marble decorations, and the railway station, where we first step on to Venice's treasure-laden soil, we see on the right the garden belonging to the Palazzo Gradenigo, situated on a lateral canal—an extensive, princely looking building, which formerly contained a riding-school—and so find ourselves opposite the giant dome of San Simeon Piccolo, a church of dignified style, an imitation of the Pantheon in Rome, to some extent spoilt by the disproportionate size of its dome.

After a row of commonplace buildings, the eye rests with pleasure on the luxuriant green of an extensive park, which contrasts pleasantly with the shining reddish buildings of rough-hewn stone. This is the finest garden in Venice, and is known as the Papadopoli; it occupies the site of the old Chiesa della Croce. A column, with capital decorated with single letters, rises from a picturesque eminence which looks like the turret of a knightly castle. This column resembles exactly the monoliths opposite the side façade of the Church of San Marco, and is said by experts to come as they did from the Temple of Saint Saba, at Ptolomais, which the Venetians destroyed, and from which they sent three of the overturned columns home as proofs of their victory. The Temple of Saint Saba belonged to the sixth century of the Christian era, and the columns have the ornamentation usual among the Greeks of that time. The crosses, which adorn the lower portion of the said monoliths, however, must have been cut on them by the Venetians or Genoese as emblems of victory.

We have now completed our review of the Grand Canal and the fine buildings adorning it, for we are at the entrance to the far-stretching lagoons.





A FONDAMENTA AT MIDSUMMER.

Venice in the Dog-days.

"'Tis sad to have to do at last
A task we ever shunned in our life past."

It is not the sun that bothers you; on the contrary, so long as you sail about near the wide-stretching arms of the Canal Grande and the Canele della Giudecca, or prowl amongst the back quarters of Venice, the sun remains your very good friend, even if he be perhaps a little more overpowering than is exactly agreeable. You perspire freely, but still feel perfectly comfortable.

The plague of the dog-days in Venice you first feel in a *tête-à-tête* with the shade, which awaits you with murderous intentions at home in your study overlooking the narrow sunless Calle, or the lagoon, so noisy during the dog-days on account of its being used as a universal swimming bath. There, within those four walls, where you feel so cool and comfortable for the first few moments, where the light is so pleasantly subdued, and where you are fanned by the mild



ICE-CREAM VENDORS (GELATI).

air which, with its swarms of gnats, rises from the water foundations of Venice—even there, I say, the worst awaits you. Only let it occur to you to busy yourself with any brain-work, were it but ordinary letter-writing. You will find every idea you try to put into words escaping from you, and your eyelids drowsily drooping in spite of yourself. The black coffee, thanks to repeated recourse to it, has long ceased to have the desired effect; a feeling of unspeakable languor comes over you; a cool moisture overspreads your brow, until, springing up alarmed, you confess to yourself with shame, "I am not fit for anything."

Oh, Siren! old, even to some extent wrinkled and decayed, when seen by daylight, are you not yet satiated with chaining

to yourself the workers—all but those belonging to the holy order of fishermen or gondoliers—and reducing them to a set of irresponsible idlers?

"It is the sultry heat of noon; at this time of year one is no better off anywhere else," you whisper to yourself in delusive consolation. "I shall be all right for work in the evening." So saying, you lay down your arms before the sirocco, and either row out to the Lido, where you feel quite another man in the sun and sea air, or you crawl on to your bed, where you feel equally comfortable.

Evening comes, and you feel up to anything again. You are impelled to think and study, you collect your thoughts, and put down on paper things you have seen and done. Set to work; you will give up soon enough. Experience tells you beforehand how it will be. You seize book and pen, you endeavour to scrape together a few thoughts, as does the careful man his savings, and while you are putting such coercion on your natural inclinations your sense of comfort has fled. If you have never before given in to the temptation of resigning the use of your five senses and of taking the dreamy apathetic Oriental as your model, I recommend you to do so, if you would pass the dog-days in Venice with any degree of comfort. Follow the instinct which repeatedly whispers to you "rest," no matter when or where, so that you get rest of mind and body. Seat yourself for the *n*th time on the Piazza di San Marco; drink another cup of black coffee; try an iced coffee ("Nero in ghiaccio") for a change; imbibe a sherry cobbler through the convenient straw; you will find yourself comparatively comfortable.

Balmy breezes caress your brow, and you will be making fruitless endeavours to mop your damp hair dry, which, like that of a sculptured river-god—provided you have enough of it—will be for ever hanging down over your face.

"Man is created for contemplation, all else is foolishness"—so accept your laziness with a sense of cheerful equanimity. For an instant you may succeed in



CHILDREN BATHING IN A CANAL.

spurring your mental powers to great things. But patience! do not rouse the lion in his wrath, for when it comes as a lion the sirocco does not understand a joke, although it is termed, paradoxically enough, the sirocco canicolare—and our friend can take a bitter revenge. But now a crashing blast of trumpets contradicts your short-lived philosophy by its sudden effect upon yourself and those lounging around. The Banda Cittadina strikes up a dance, in spite of the temperature of thirty-three degrees centigrade in the shade. "There are heroes still," you murmur, and hastily add "heroines too," as you see the superhuman efforts of the many fair ones suddenly appearing on the scene, striving with their curls, waving hair, and other beauties to resist the levelling effects of the sirocco's breath.

Aristocratic Venetians love to while away the dusk of the sweltering hot days lounging about, so to speak, in the arms of the still bewitching old Venezia. On the terrace of the Lidô, looking over to the Adriatic, which is of a vivid blue in such weather, society leads a uniform sea-side existence of bathing and dawdling, with an obligato accompaniment of luxuries on the part of the ladies, who do not scorn even on the beach to enhance their charms by the display of costly diamonds. Venice, during this hottest period of the year, which usually begins with the first days of July and ends with the last days of August, is essentially a fashionable sea-side resort; the most delightful or unbearable place, according to the taste of the visitor, be he worker or idler. The blessed condition of *dolce far niente*, known alike to the upper ten and to the dregs of society, is that of feeling at ease when others languish, both classes making it their principle to yield to the most absolute mental inertia, to sleep late into the day, and to stay up until the small hours of the morning.

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The lives of the upper ten, as of the lowest orders of society, are passed at that season of the year on the sea-shore. This circumstance ensures well-being to both. One set bathes, talks scandal, flirts, listens to the waves at the flood and to the orchestra at the ebb ; lunches or dines facing the sea ; and plays florian at night for stakes so high that their brows are bathed in perspiration in their anxiety—best antidote to the effects of the sirocco ; or they glide out in the silent gondola—when all others sleep and mosquitoes alone are waking—with lover or friend, to the sound of singing or of the mandoline, far away to where the yearning gaze seems to encompass the Infinite. They then retire to sleep within mosquito curtains until late into the day.

The lower orders, or fisher class, on their side, push out in their boats, with streamers flying beneath the starry sky, on to the calm surface of the water unstirred by breath of wind, and row far out to the horizon to where the sea seems to meet the sky. Not until the pure breath of the chaste morning air stirs the atmosphere do the fish-laden boats steer towards the Rialto. The disposal of the freight is soon effected. The weather-beaten sons of the lagoons sell it to the fish-dealers. With the first rays of the sun their work is done, and they probably stretch themselves by the water's edge, under a shady sotto-portico, on the cool paving stones, where a gentle breeze is always blowing. The high tide bathes their bare feet deliciously ; they pay no heed to it, but sleep on unconcerned through the long summer day.

Those who can imitate them in their blissful absence of wants do not need to know the tortures of such as are bound to think and work in Venice in the Giorni Caniculari.



Walks in Venice.

I.

"The spring-tide breeze makes music in each street ;
Catching from every flower its odour sweet,
It flings the fragrance far and wide around,
E'en to the children on the sunny ground."

In order that a stranger in Venice may see with enjoyment not only the most attractive, but the most instructive, of its sights, nothing is more essential than that his outset should be well timed. He need have nothing beyond a very moderate acquaintance with the language ; indeed, a comparatively few sentences will suffice ; and then, if he be provided with a correct map, he may safely trust himself to find his way about the city, and there will not be the least occasion for him to be encumbered by the services of any of the guides, whose incessant talking would only disturb the natural impressions of his mind.

All eagerness to see too much at a time should be controlled. It is the witness of experience that the crowding of sight upon sight is to entail a sort of paralysis upon the receptive powers ; and as Venice itself is an ancient shrine filled to overflowing with the rarest of art treasures, it is obvious that the visitor, if he would not be overwhelmed by their numbers, should proceed to investigate them with due deliberation.

For our stroll, then, into the heart of Venice, we would choose a bright May morning. We would prefer seeing even the gloomiest of the "calli" lighted with something of the southern sunshine. But, first of all, we had perhaps better refresh ourselves with a morning meal at Florian's, where the *café-au-lait* is always excellent, and we get some of the hot-buttered rolls, called *rosettes*.

As a rule, in well-nigh every town are public resorts that have a special notoriety of their own. Florian's may be said to be one of these, and the stranger's attention may be fairly



THE MERCERIA
(seen from above).

called to it. For more than a century the hospitable doors of this establishment have been open. The house not only provides entertainment, but in a certain degree it fulfils the purpose of a club. It is not so generally known that its originator was a personality of some mark in the time of the Republic. In his day the place was a lemonade shop rather than a café, but another of the Florians also was a person of considerable repute. Whenever the patricians, merchants, or adventurers returned from their voyages, they were accustomed to betake themselves forthwith to the host of this establishment to ascertain whether any letters or messages had been left for them. From him, too, the information could, as a general rule, be procured as to whether any particular individual was resident in Venice or had gone away. Frequently affairs of the most delicate nature would be confided to him; and as it is said this state of things went on for several decades, it cannot be surprising that his reputation should continue to survive him.

Tradition further relates that with another of the Florians—for there was a sort of dynasty of them—the great sculptor Canova was on terms of the most intimate friendship. The café proprietor, now a man of good position and means, had given the young artist of Posagno some substantial assistance to enable him to start on his career in life, and his benevolence was not forgotten. Years afterwards, Florian was paralysed, and one of his legs had to be amputated; Canova, who by that time had acquired a large knowledge of anatomy, applied his ingenuity and succeeded in constructing an artificial limb by which the condition of Florian was alleviated, and he was enabled to move about with wonderful facility.

Even now it is hardly an exaggeration to affirm of the Café Florian that it is no insignificant competitor in one sense with the Municipal Post Office. In any case where the address of any resident in Venice is imperfectly known, nothing is more common than that an envelope with the proper name should be left at Florian's, and so wide is the acquaintance of the owner with the population that it will be an exceptional case if the document does not find its way to the proper quarter.

However, by this time, our morning meal may be presumed to be at an end, and it is time that we start upon our way.

Yet how shall it be about that promised history of San Marco? "*Strada facendo*," as is the phrase here. As we go along we shall get an opportunity perchance to have a little talk upon the vicissitudes of the Patron Saint which are generally believed, but which are so overlaid with historical data that the humorous side of the matter is hardly vouchsafed its due consideration.

Whither then shall we first turn our steps? Shall we go to the Mercerie, or shall we make our way to the Via Ventidue Marzo, and there get within the arms of the great polyp?

We decide upon the Mercerie. Well and good. But first of all we must pause a moment to gaze at those two granite columns which stand reared aloft, and which have a world-wide renown. Transported here in 1172, it excites our wonder to conceive how they could possibly have been conveyed in the vessels of that date. Even now, with all the appliances of modern science, the difficulty of such transport is enormous, and we know what energy and force had to be concentrated on the removal of Cleopatra's Needle from the shore

of Egypt to the Embankment of the Thames.

Monuments of Greek supremacy in the distant past they are, and they had perchance lain prostrate for long, may be for centuries, before the appropriate spot was thought of for their re-erection. How the place on which they stand had flourished long before as the exchange where, subsidized by the Senate, the money dealers bartered their gold, is too well known to need repeating here. The very situation favoured it. The Lombard business flourished, enjoying as it did a special advantage in its proximity to the Riva degli Schiavoni, where ships from all climates came in contact with each other. Men came and went; men of all countries and of all complexions—and the men brought money of all weights and all mints; but however diverse the men and the monies might be, the one essential and indispensable thing was that the gold should stand the test and show the proper carat-fineness.

We are not going, however, just now to stop any longer in front of these two memorable columns; we will make our way more towards the interior of the city. The thoroughfares abound in jewellers' shops, and the windows of well-nigh every one of these exhibit models in the shape of nick-nacks without number, representing either the pillars themselves, or the figure of St. Theodore, or the form of the ancient lion, the jewelled eyes of which were taken out in Paris. These miniature memorials serve to keep the subject before our minds, and we remember how that midway between the columns once stood the seat of judgment and the scene of execution, in which the sentences, whether of hanging or beheading, were carried out with a stern barbarity that still rouses the sense of horror and sympathy. The "Serenissima" omitted no opportunity of inspiring the citizens with awe, and hence originated the custom of accused and accusers being ordered to wear the black mask that had been ordained and enforced by various tribunals elsewhere.



THE MERCERIA.

But this is a sad and depressing topic, uncongenial with the bright sunshine in which we proposed to take our stroll. It should rather amuse us to recollect that before the spot was appointed to be the scene of bloody executions in the sixteenth century, thus displacing the wooden booths of the money-changers, it had been occupied by a kind of gambling-house. Now, who can say whether those gaming tables* were not the mere germ of that lottery system, which in later times has been in such vogue throughout Italy? The first drawing is said to have been made by decree of the Signoria on March 19th, 1594. Without discussing this question any further, we may entertain ourselves for the moment by imagining how we must have been trying the patience of San Marco, whose predecessor, San Teodaro (or Todaro, as the Venetians are accustomed to name him), is still standing here erect and triumphant, trampling on the crocodile he has slain; for will not San Marco be indignant with us if we fail to take account of his history, or to recall the circumstances of the evangelist first landing in Venice? For this, however, we have allowed the time to pass by.

And now, where are we? We have just come to the beginning of the second of the Mercerie. The corner house is Mello's "Benvenuto Cellini," and very dazzling it is, bright with its gorgeous display of jewellery. All these Mercerie are busy, lively streets. The name "Merceria" simply means "a shop." None too broad are the thoroughfares, but the attraction of the windows is very great, so that there never fails to be a throng of passengers from morning till night. These streets run from the Clock Tower to the Campo San Salvatore. There are three of them, and they may be described as fitting one into another like the joints of a stove-pipe, the first and second of them forming the angle. At the end the way bends to the right into the Via Due Aprile, to the left across the Piazza San Salvatore to the Ponte del Lovo. The Via Due Aprile, a lively modern street, which was widened a few years ago, leads direct to the Rialto.

Before leaving the Mercerie, it remains to be mentioned that until the year 1297 these passages, narrow as they are and shut in by tall houses on both sides, were always noisy with the resounding hoofs of horses; there was incessant movement to and fro of armed knights and of busy merchants. At San Salvatore there was a wide-spreading fig tree, under the shadow of which the horses were fastened while their owners went about and transacted their business. In different parts of the islands of which Venice then, as Venice now, was comprised, there were open pasturages where foals, sheep, lambs and goats browsed upon the verdure that was always abundant. At the date above mentioned all riding in the Mercerie was stopped, the Senate having prohibited it under penalties, as being dangerous to the public safety. Tournaments were allowed with jousts on horseback, but only on the Piazza di San Marco, until the fifteenth century.

There is a tale that the last man to ride along the Mercerie was a husband who not only had the vileness to traffic in his wife's attractions, but had the shameless audacity to keep a regular account of the profits he thence derived. A Vigilance Committee, appointed by the authorities, brought the criminal to justice, and sentence was passed upon him. He was condemned to be dressed up in yellow clothes, to have

* The earliest playing-cards are supposed to have been produced in Venice.

a huge pair of horns fastened on his head, and so to ride through the Mercerie, mounted on a donkey, for the diversion of the people.

The Via due Aprile leads, as it has been said, to the Rialto, opening upon the Campo San Bartolomeo. This little primitive, though bustling piazza, with its old-fashioned popular cafés, has a wealth of noteworthy associations which might detain us long. We can only glance at a few of the more remarkable details.

In the first place our attention may be directed to the house, still intact, where Goldoni, with his young and charming Genoese wife, lived about 130 years since. There he made his immortal contributions to Venetian comedy; and thence he took his departure, turning his back upon his ungrateful countrymen, who gave his genius scanty recognition. He went to Paris, where for many years he lived under somewhat more favourable circumstances, but he died at length at an advanced age and in great poverty, having been deprived, at the time of the Great Revolution, of a pension that had been granted to him by Royalty.

Goldoni's fame is perpetuated by an admirable statue in bronze. It represents the poet in his true character, a magnanimous, lovable, unsophisticated man. He is dressed in the somewhat cumbrous costume of the last century, and as he stands out in bag-wig and cocked hat, stick in hand, he looks as if at any moment he might begin to expatiate on the conventionality and unreality of his time. There are some connoisseurs who pronounce the statue to be the finest in conception and execution of all the monuments in the city. It is the production of Professor Dal Zotto, himself a Venetian sculptor.

Another object that may arrest our attention in this charming little piazza is the famous Theriak-pharmacy. The preparation still has a place in medical practice, but we can only estimate the all-important part that Venetian Theriak once played as a remedy appropriate for every conceivable malady, by actually seeing the huge terra-cotta jars that used as a matter of course to be included in the requirements of every household. Theriak was to ancient Venice a sort of elixir of life. Possibly at the time when the Republic was at its zenith, and when a feast in a burgher's family was reputed to cost five hundred ducats, the medicine may have done good service, but its reputation could not last for ever. The secret of its preparation was under state supervision, and the recipe was known to only two pharmacists, of whom the chemist at San Bartolomeo is the sole surviving descendant.

For the present we may leave the Rialto to our left, and go straight over the Ponte dell' Olio towards the Malibran Theatre. It is the route that takes us to San Giovanni e Paolo and to the liveliest quarter of the city,



THE CAMPANILE OF THE CHURCH
OF SAN SALVATORE.

which bears on its face the most unquestionable marks of its antiquity. Along the Salizzada del Fondaco dei Tedeschi (Salizzada being merely the name of a street with a pavement, which was once exceptionally rare), past the Church of San Giovanni Crisostomo, and then turning to the right, we come, in the rear of the building, upon the Corte del Sabbion. Here may be noticed some remnants of the once famous Palazzo del Polo, and an arabesque archway of the eleventh century.

To such as are genuine lovers of antiquities, and not mere dilettante, we would here give a recommendation that they should make a little *détour*. Close at hand there is an edifice that, although it can lay no claim to being beautiful in itself, yet has certain charms of true historical interest. The place is not altogether easy to find, and accordingly, on reaching the Church of San Giovanni Crisostomo, it is advisable to inquire for the Campiello Remer. After getting there, you will on looking round observe that there is an insignificant alley, extremely narrow, leading out of it, a fruit stall at the corner serving as an indication that you are going in the right direction. Not deterred by the repulsiveness of the dirty little Calle, keep on till you have passed under the archway, and you will emerge from the gloomy darkness close to the Grand Canal, in a courtyard where you will have before your eyes the object of your search. It is the palace which formerly belonged to the famous Cardinal Bembo. One of its specialities is that it has an external staircase, an adjunct to the structure which is extremely rare in modern Venice. It is much to be deplored that this noteworthy residence of the Cardinal should be in such a decayed and dilapidated condition; but notwithstanding all the neglect which has disfigured it, every intelligent antiquarian will acknowledge that it presents much that interests him. Before Bembo was made a Cardinal, Lucrezia Borgia kept up a correspondence with him, and some of her letters, as well as a lock of her exquisite hair, are preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, though they are no longer exhibited. The building is now owned as a joint property by Count Antonio Settini, whose ancestors have seen far better days. The Count himself occupies the Palazzino, adjoining the Palazzo Bembo, and obviously of about the same date. This Palazzino is situated on the Grand Canal, nearly opposite the Pescheria (fish market), and is also accessible from the water side. Those who have a fancy for antique silk fabrics may find there what is perhaps the largest collection that the city of the Doges could show, and ever and again a good bargain may be obtained. Cramped and confined as are the quarters of the Count, he has nevertheless been honoured by visits from empresses and queens.

What may be called the out-of-the-way holes and corners of Venice form a sort of Charybdis in which the inexperienced visitor may easily find himself a victim, and he will, therefore, do well to make his way back immediately to the less intricate thoroughfares.

The Malibran Theatre stands upon the site of a large palace of the Polo family which has been taken down. It was opened in 1678. It is a capacious structure with no pretensions to style; but as it is the lowest in its prices of admission, it may claim to be the highest in popularity. An opera, performed by no means discretely, may not unfrequently be heard there. A singular circumstance gave rise to the theatre assuming its present name. It was in 1835 that Malibran was singing night after



HIGH ALTAR OF THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DEI MIRACOLI.

night at the Fenice Theatre; her success was unbounded; the result being that all other places of entertainment were quite deserted. The *impresario* of this theatre saw nothing before him but certain ruin. In desperation he went straight to the great songstress; and when he had told her his fears and implored her to help him, she replied, "Ah, yes, that means that I ought to sing at your theatre too; well, then, I will sing there." And Malibran kept her promise. For three successive nights, in the parts of Desdemona, Cenerentola and Ninetta, she appeared on the stage of the previously forsaken house, and it became crowded to overflowing. The profits of the proprietor were wonderful, and at the end of the performances he hurried off to the *artiste*, carrying with him a bag of sequins as a token of his gratitude. Declining to touch the gold, she said, "Do you imagine that I went to

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SAN GIOVANNI E PAOLO
WITH THE MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL.

your theatre to sing for money? No; when Malibran intends to do a favour, she will not do it by halves." Overcome by her generosity, the manager came to the resolution that his theatre should henceforth be called "The Malibran," and her portrait was put in a place of honour above the proscenium of the stage.

Round about this building, which is conspicuous for its angular irregularity, there is always, from morning to night, more active life than is to be seen in any other part of Venice. The localities adjacent to the Rialto are those in which the larger mercantile affairs of the city are carried on. But although it is so especially the resort of business men, it must be understood that the entire neighbourhood is not lacking in objects of rich architectural interest. One of the most remarkable of these is the Church of the Madonna dei Miracoli, to which we may now direct our steps.

Here it may not be amiss to repeat the warning which has already been given, that in all our strolling about Venice it is, as far as possible, desirable to limit our inspection to one particular architectural object at a time. No doubt there may be exceptions, but ordinarily there are not many who are capable of grasping the details of more than one building at once. A professional architect, indeed, or a highly cultivated art-critic, may have advantages in this direction, but when a traveller of average intelligence hurries on from one monument to another in a foreign city, he resembles the owner of a comprehensive library who bestows his attention exclusively on the bindings of the books.



THE COLLEONI MONUMENT AND THE CHURCH OF SAN GIOVANNI E PAOLO.



MONUMENT OF THE DOGE MOCENIGO
(San Giovanni e Paolo).

amongst the most striking of the architectural works that ever were accomplished by the genius and energy of the Lombardi family. The families of Bon, Lombardi, Francia and others whose names are so intimately associated with the finest edifices in Venice, transmitted their craft from father to son, and from son to grandson, and in this way is explained the fact that buildings of obviously diverse periods are attributed to architects of the same name.

We must linger another moment over this structure. Its charm lies primarily in the perfect harmony of its proportions, and this has been more completely revealed since the cultivated taste of modern days has insisted on the removal of the various altars, statues and other erections, which had so encroached upon the area as to mar the purity of the proper outlines. As it is seen at present, it is the pearl of Venetian churches.

It may perhaps be urged that the Church of "the Wonder-working Mother of God" may be regarded as an exception to this rule; in itself it is so complete that, with respect to its purity alike of form and style, it may almost be said to stand alone.

The church dates from the early Renaissance, and shows at the same time some slight tendency towards the mediæval Byzantine style. The name of the original architect is uncertain, but the design was no doubt carried out faithfully in 1481 under the supervision of Pietro Lombardo. Many of the paintings in the interior are of the highest value, but besides these the elaborate perforations and exquisite finish of the stonework demand a careful inspection. From an artistic point of view, the Church "dei Miracoli" must be reckoned

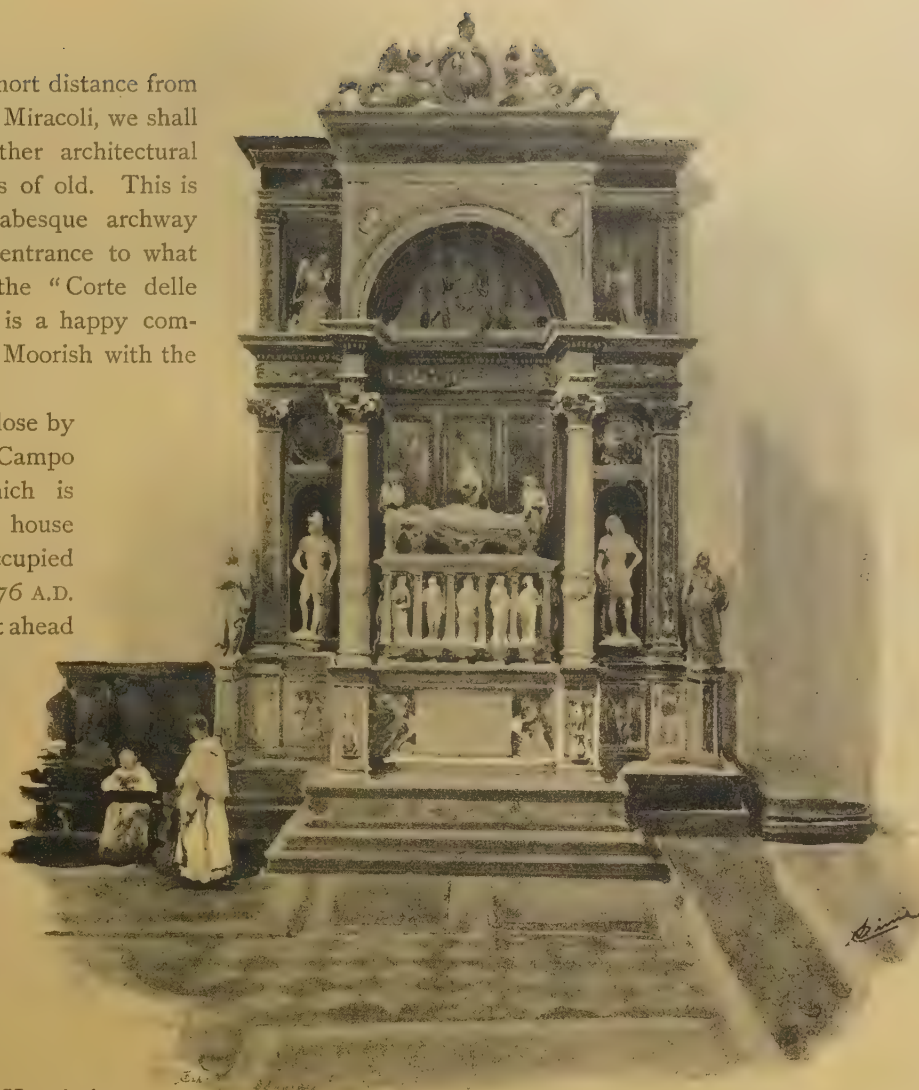
Only a short distance from the Church dei Miracoli, we shall come upon another architectural gem of the days of old. This is the pointed arabesque archway that forms the entrance to what is known as the "Corte delle Monache." It is a happy combination of the Moorish with the Gothic style.

Almost close by this is the "Campo Tiziano," in which is situated the house which Titian occupied from 1531 to 1576 A.D. Going on straight ahead — or, as the Venetians say, *sempre dritto* — we soon arrive at the Piazza San Giovanni e Paolo, and there we find ourselves in full view both of the church of the same name and of the Municipal Hospital.

Opposite is an equestrian statue to the memory of Bartolomeo Colleoni, who

was a general of high renown in the time of the Republic. Adjoining the Church of San Giovanni e Paolo is the Scuola di San Marco, remarkable for the singular reliefs in perspective of two lions which adorn it. This is now a hospital.

Scuola is a term that needs some explanation. As Venetians understand it, it is applied to buildings that have been erected in immediate proximity to churches, and in many cases under the protection of church guilds. The members of these guilds were accustomed to use them for their assemblies, and to meet in them to discuss and pass their resolutions; whilst another purpose which they served was that they were the depositories in which valuables of all kinds, whether pictures, manuscripts, coins, or historic relics, might be stored and made secure for posterity. Some of the members had the right of claiming for themselves and any meritorious



MONUMENT TO THE DOGE VENDRAMIN
(in San Giovanni e Paolo).



FRIEZE IN THE CHAPEL DEL ROSARIO IN SAN GIOVANNI E PAOLO.

kinsman a place for burial, contiguous to the church and the scuola. Generally the foundations were guilds of industry, but apparently under the special patronage of some wealthy patrician. There seems a difficulty in accounting in any other way for the circumstance that amongst the graves of the craftsmen there should be found from time to time an emblazoned scutcheon, which has covered the remains of a Venetian aristocrat and is decorated with heraldic and high-sounding titles.

Again *sempre dritto*—straight on; we shall soon find ourselves upon the “Fondamenta Nuova,” where an agreeable surprise awaits us. If the weather be fine and the atmosphere clear—and more particularly if it be getting on towards evening—we shall find ourselves gazing at the Euganean hills, rising as it might seem straight up from the broad lagoon, their summits blending with the horizon. Right in front, only separated by the intervening water, is the island of Murano, and not far away is that of San Michele, which has been adopted by the Venetians as their Necropolis.

While we are still so close to San Giovanni e Paolo, we should not fail to glance at the halls and colonnades of the old Dominican cloister; they seem to form an atmosphere of peace and art. Napoleon Buonaparte, while on his career of victory, paid a visit to the monastery, and stood and gazed upon the distant prospect just described. He is said to have even joined the monks at meal-time, and in connection with this a little story has been handed down as authentic. The Emperor was charmed, of course, with the splendid paintings by Carpaccio, Bassano, Tintoretto and Lorenzo Sotio, but nothing delighted him more than the costly decorations of the Capella del Rosario, in which at that time there were not only the world-renowned bas-reliefs, but likewise the superb “St. Peter Martyr” of Titian, and Bellini’s loveliest of Madonnas. Both of these masterpieces were lost



FRIEZE IN THE CHAPEL DEL ROSARIO IN SAN GIOVANNI E PAOLO.

in the conflagration of 1867, which was fatal also to many other works of inestimable value. But besides his admiration of the pictures, Napoleon was profoundly impressed by the stateliness of the Dominicans' apartments. One day, so goes the tale, he invited himself to be the guest

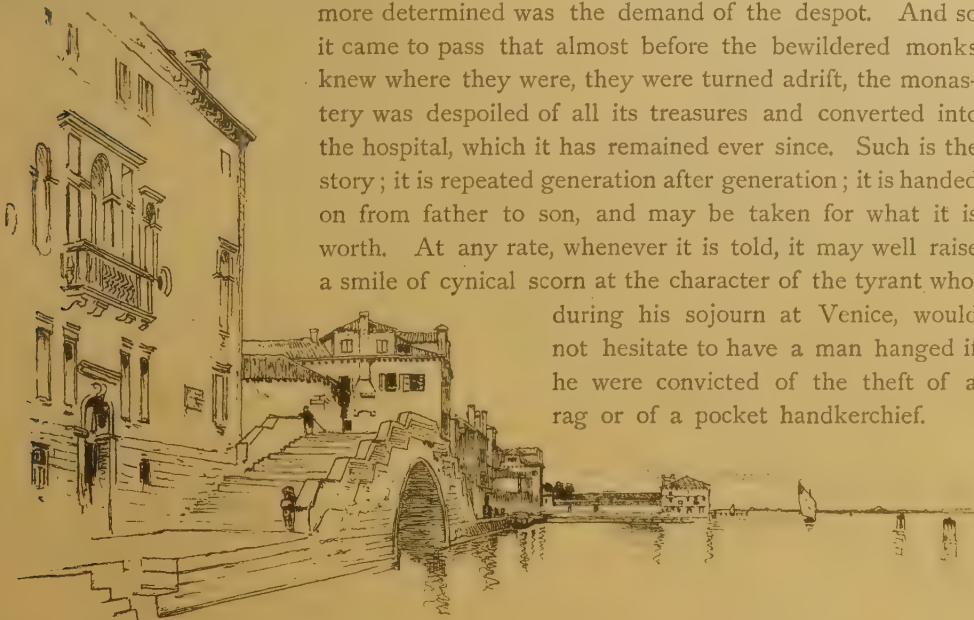


SAN MICHELE, THE VENETIAN NECROPOLIS.

of the community at dinner. The hour came; the refectory was a blaze of gold; the dishes were gold, the plates were gold, the goblets were gold, while the viands and the wine were of a quality that were worthy of a royal repast. Nothing could be too lavish or too costly to show the Cæsar due respect. The Cæsar noted all; he expressed his gratitude for the sumptuousness of the entertainment, and took his leave. The fraternity, however, were not long in discovering their lack of prudence in making such an ostentatious display of their treasures. The Corsican was ever a Corsican, and had the eye of a magpie for precious gold and precious gems. The wealth of the monastery was an unexpected disclosure to him, to be taken advantage of without delay, and it was not long before he applied to the monastic brotherhood for the loan of a million ducats in solid cash. The monks were in consternation. Whence were they to get together such a sum? Was not their property all in land and inconvertible possessions? But all remonstrance was in vain. The gold was there, and the stronger the resistance of the community, the

more determined was the demand of the despot. And so it came to pass that almost before the bewildered monks knew where they were, they were turned adrift, the monastery was despoiled of all its treasures and converted into the hospital, which it has remained ever since. Such is the story; it is repeated generation after generation; it is handed on from father to son, and may be taken for what it is worth. At any rate, whenever it is told, it may well raise a smile of cynical scorn at the character of the tyrant who,

during his sojourn at Venice, would not hesitate to have a man hanged if he were convicted of the theft of a rag or of a pocket handkerchief.





THE GREEK CHURCH (SAN GIORGIO DEI GRECI).

Opposite San Giovanni e Paolo the road leads towards San Lorenzo, whence we proceed towards the Greek Church and the treasury of San Giorgio dei Greci. This no doubt is one of the most curious and striking quarters of Venice, being in a large degree made up of palatial residences, often beautiful in themselves, but almost all deserted. Every one of them seems to present some distinctive feature, and on the whole the neighbourhood might tempt us to believe it a representation of the ancient solemnity of Venetian pride, and to embody what an artist would describe as the *genre* of the place.

Right opposite the Hospital there is a long alley of the narrowest dimensions, called the Calle della Panada. It derives the name which it has retained from the remote days when the porridge or beggars' broth was doled out to the indigent from the numerous cloisters. It is a spot that may be regarded in a way as unique.

Close at hand is the Sotto-portico Widmann-Rezzonico, passing through which we come upon a bit of Venice which is very much out of character with the general light and coquettish air of the city. Hereabouts the prevailing aspect may be said to be quite feudal, so stately are the old palaces in their structure, and so solemn and death-like is the silence that now surrounds them. Gems of architecture they remain, and to them all, with scarcely an exception, there is attached some traditional story or romantic tale of history. The district altogether will be felt to be in striking contrast with the general character of the city, and lacking altogether what we will not call the levity, but may describe as the sprightly light-heartedness, that elsewhere predominates. Venice may be regarded as petrified here into a stony seriousness.

The Church of San Lorenzo was originally a convent, belonging to the Benedictine order. Its history dates from about 1000 A.D., but the fabric itself was not built until 1595, when it was proceeded with under very favourable auspices. The singular circumstance is recorded that, at the very commencement of the undertaking, the workmen who were digging out the excavations for the foundation came upon two of the huge jars of the kind known as "zare," and which are still in use for holding water. These were found to be full up to the brim of gold coins. There was no doubt as to how the treasure had come there. The money had been the property of Angela Michiel, an abbess of the convent, who had thus buried her wealth for security after the murder of her brother, the Doge Vincenzo Michiel.

At no great distance from the church stands the Palazzo Zorzi, a building in the Lombard style. In the cortile the Corinthian capitals may be mentioned as fine in architectural details.



THE RIO DI SAN LORENZO.

On the adjacent Fondamenta Osmarin stands the Palazzo Priuli, a graceful Gothic building of the fourteenth century. One of its features sure to attract attention is its prominent projecting window. Sansovino has told us that this palace was beautified by frescoes from the hand of Palma Vecchio, but of these there are no traces now.

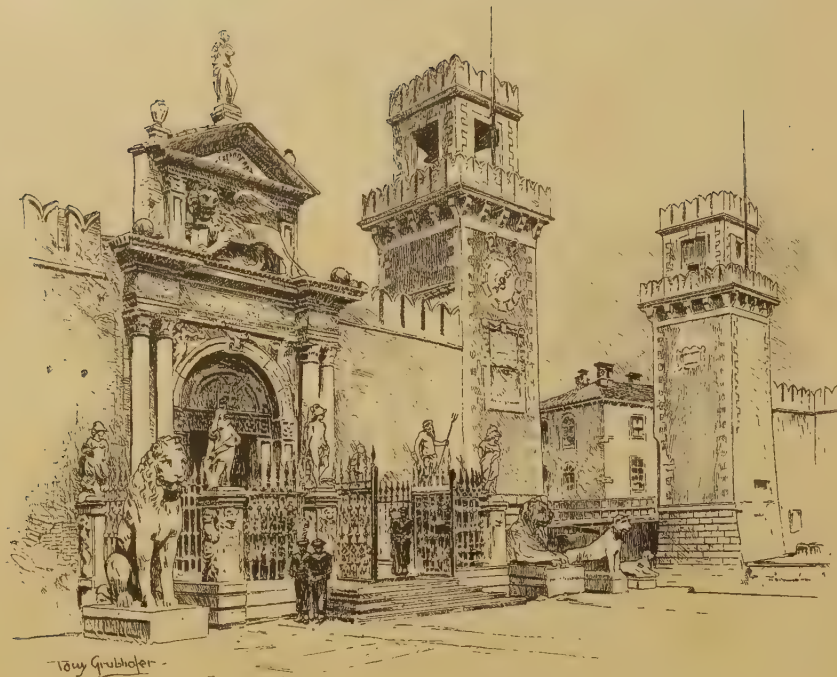
As we are strolling about, we shall be sure to find ourselves before long opposite the Church of San Giorgio dei Greci, and we may well pause for a while to look at it. It was in 1498 that the Greeks resident in Venice, some merchants, others fugitives from the Turks, formed a resolution to erect a Greek church, and obtained the requisite permission to carry out their design.

One of the other passages close by is the Calle San Antonino, and leads to the church after which it is named. This church was founded in the ninth century; but the ancient structure was removed and the edifice rebuilt in the sixteenth century, so that it now presents comparatively little of interest.

On the right the Fondamenta leads to another church—that of San Giorgio degli Schiavoni—where, besides a bas-relief by Pietro da Salo bearing date 1551, there is preserved the noteworthy series, by Carpaccio, of scenes illustrating the lives of the saintly patrons of Dalmatia and Albania.

We need only retrace our steps for a short way, leaving this little church of San Antonino, and we shall come to the Campo della Bragola, and nearly opposite to us we shall see the Palazzo Badoer, bearing one of the oldest names

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THE GATEWAY OF THE ARSENAL.

in Venetian history. The building is fourteenth century pointed work, and the walls still retain traces of fresco-paintings. The Campo altogether may be justly regarded as a type of mediæval Venice. It contains a church dedicated to San Giovanni in Bragola.

"What is the origin of the word 'Bragola'?" has been a question about which there has been much dispute among the learned. In the ponderous treatises, now extremely rare, written in Italian by Selvatico and Lazzeri, "bragola" is identified with the Latin "brajum," which indicates mud; and if there be any warrant for this, it would merely imply that San Giovanni in Bragola was "the Church in the mire or marsh."

This is a good opportunity to yield to our wish to inspect the Arsenal, although it is obviously impossible to do much more than take a superficial glance, where there is such a multiplicity of objects that merit careful examination. It would be altogether beyond our limits to expatiate upon the important part that the Arsenal has played in the annals of the City of the Lagoons. For centuries it was the foremost armoury and the most extensive dockyard in the world. At the time when the Republic was at the height of its power the Arsenal gave employment to sixteen thousand workmen. Originally founded on the twin islands, the Gemelle, and at no great distance from the still existing Castello Olivolo (the Castle of the Olive-yards), the dockyards became inadequate in their extent to the ever-increasing demands upon them; and they were accordingly continually enlarged during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, receiving further additions in the nineteenth. At the time of the Austrian supremacy the area of the Arsenal extended over two square miles, and since



SAN PIETRO DI CASTELLO.

that time it has received two important adjuncts, so that without any exaggeration it may be affirmed that, taking into account the long lines of wharves, factories, storehouses, and offices, it constitutes a complete town in itself. The Corderia della Tana, where cordage is made, has a length of about eleven hundred feet. The tour of inspection can never fail to be extremely interesting, and of late years ample facilities have been afforded for admission to the various departments. Up to the present date the dockyards of Venice have remained the cradles of the gigantic ironclads which are, not without reason, the pride of the Italian navy. The aggregate number of workmen who now find employment in connection with the Arsenal is not less than four thousand five hundred.

In our present desultory walk we must be content to accomplish nothing more than an examination of the façade, which consists of a square elevation in the Lombard style, modified by the classical, and with a noble triumphal arch, supported on substantial double pillars, the whole framework giving the structure a character of vast solidity, and constituting what may be pronounced one of the finest monuments of the fifteenth century. Of the four lions that adorn the erection, and are placed at the entrance, two are entitled to especial attention, not merely on account of their antiquity, of which mention has already been made, but because of the inscriptions, in Runic letters, with which their bodies are covered. Running like a band along the back of the lion on the left hand, the writing forms the disconnected words, "Thisar Thair." On the other lion the inscription is in a better state of preservation; it runs along the thigh, and may be read as "Litorais . . R . . . Salionvathisithiv . . . Runarat . Ha" There

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is a second inscription crossing the animal's flank, made up of the words, "Tilsoar Tiat . . . Athumallanaaf Tarin." Professor Kopisch, of Breslau, is of opinion that the inscriptions all date from the tenth century, being very probably the production of mercenaries from the Baltic who were in the service of the Greek Emperor.

There is a drawbridge that has to be opened on the entrance of any large vessel. Crossing this, and turning to the left, we are on our way towards the Public Gardens, passing, as we proceed, several churches, none of them lacking in interest or unworthy of detailed inspection. Amongst these is San Pietro di Castello, the most ancient church in Venice, although it was completely restored in the sixteenth century. Until the nineteenth century the island of San Pietro di Castello, or Olivolo, was entirely independent of the Rivo-alto (the Rialto), and as a consequence considered itself as quite distinct from the rest of Venice. Hence arose the notorious feuds of the Castellani and the Nicolotti, which continued up to the present era, and resembled the wars of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines on a more limited scale.

A classical spot we shall pass is the house in which Petrarch lived. It was presented to the poet by the Republic in 1362, in exchange for his library, which formed the nucleus of the present Marciana.

We soon find ourselves now in the Via Garibaldi, that lively thoroughfare which on every sunny day—and far into the night—is always gay with a true southern vitality. It will make a pleasant conclusion to our stroll, leading as it does along the Riva degli Schiavoni back to the Piazza di San Marco, which will inevitably be the beginning and the end of every excursion.

There is another way back from the Arsenal, which we might have taken, and we should have found it hardly less entertaining. We could have turned to the left, and if we had kept to our rule of going as much as possible straight on, we should pass along calle, some comparatively broad, and some uncomfortably narrow, and reach in due time the graceful Piazza S. Maria Formosa. Here, in the church of the same name as the piazza, is deposited the picture of S. Barbara, painted by Palma Vecchio. We shall next pass the end of the Campo Santa Marina, and various elaborate palaces, of which the Grimani, the Malipiero, and the Ruzzini may be mentioned as most noticeable. After a while we reach the Ruga Giuffa, where at one period the Armenian merchants were allowed to offer their goods for sale, a circum-



THE PALAZZO BIANCA CAPELLO.



THE CHURCH OF S. ZACCARIA.

stance, however, connected with anything but pleasant memories, as the advent of the dealers was accompanied by an invasion of the plague.

The end of the *ruga* opens into the *Calle Castagna* and leads ultimately to the Church of S. Filippo e Giacomo. *Ruga* is a name constantly met with all over Venice, and implies a street in which there are shops on both sides of the way. Going to the left, we soon arrive at the so-called *Ponte della Canonica*, where stands the sumptuous *Palazzo Bianca Capello*, in the hall of which are two life-sized statues. This Palace is now the property of the *Marchesi Pandolfi*.

The temptation is now irresistible to turn a little out of the way to visit the *Campo San Zaccaria*, which is one of the most renowned *piazzi* in the whole city; otherwise we might elect to turn from *Santa Marina* into the *Calle della Malvasia*, and cross the *Ponte del Pistor* to *San Lio*, a business quarter where the dealers in cheap clothes and old furniture carry on a vigorous trade. In every direction are endless picturesque studies for the artist, such as bridges, palaces and archways. The *Palazzo Facanon* may be mentioned as worthy of careful inspection; it has the repute of being one of the most imposing of Venetian Gothic buildings of the fifteenth century. The best view of it is from the bridge opposite the *Chiesa della Fava*. Along the narrow *Calle della Fava*, our way will

take us direct to the Campo S. Lio (S. Leone), where, as is so often the case, church and piazza bear the same name.

Thence we go along the famous Calle del Paradiso and find ourselves in sight of the Arco del Paradiso, that small, richly-carved, pointed arch which, with its bold span and sculptured figure of the Madonna, has formed the subject of pictures by innumerable artists.

Arches of this character in technical art parlance are known as *cuspidi*. According to old chroniclers, there was a time when they were quite numerous; now, however, they are rare, and scarcely ever to be seen except in the more remote districts of the city, and on the farther side of the water beyond the Rialto. Amongst such as remain there is hardly one that could be compared from an artistic point of view with the graceful vaulting of the Paradiso arch. These *cuspidi* were not originally constructed with any design of being ornamental decoration; they had the practical purpose of connecting two houses that stood on opposite sides of the way; generally they would indicate that the properties which were thus so conveniently put in communication with each other belonged to one and the self-same owner. The universally admired arch, of which we have here been speaking, derives its name from the former owners of all the adjacent houses, which belonged to the family of the Del Paradiso, now extinct for several centuries.

But it is high time that we should bring this ramble to an end. To persevere for long in exploring new scenes and in hearing fresh sounds is sure to entail, even with the most enthusiastic sightseer, a sense of repletion and fatigue. It must necessarily be a matter of regret that we have been compelled to dwell so much upon cold dry facts. It can hardly be said that it is by choice that we have been wandering from the tide of buoyant life which forms so rich and enlivening a background for every picture of material Venice. On a May morning such as this a golden glamour brightens every scene, and we can hardly fail to have our sympathies aroused, and to share something of the ecstatic delight of the warm-hearted poetess Marie Janitschek, whose tender verses form the heading and motto of this chapter.

Yet, after all, there are certain episodes and traditions connected with Venetian history that ought not to be omitted, if we would bring our walk to a fitting close. Some of these have afforded subjects which the old masters have seemed never weary of transferring to their canvas or depicting on the walls of their buildings. For instance, there is the story of the carrying off of the Venetian maidens, a story said to have led to the building of the magnificent Church of S. Maria Formosa. From the Ponte del Paradiso it is scarcely more than a stone's throw to the church, which may easily be visited on our way.

According to the legend, it was an ancient yearly custom on the 2nd of February for a number of Venetian brides to make a pilgrimage to the Church of S. Pietro di Castello, each carrying with her her dowry of gold and other valuables in a casket. On the occasion of this ceremonial in 944, a horde of Tridentine pirates burst into the church and made a capture of the brides with all the treasure that they had about them; but before the depredators could make good their escape with their booty, they were pursued by the Venetians, headed by the

Doge Pietro Candiano, who not only overtook them in the harbour of Caorle and recaptured all the plunder, but slew them to a man. The scene of the engagement became known ever after as the "Porto delle Donzelle," the harbour of the virgins.

A more detailed version of the story attributes the success of the pursuit to the bravery of the Guild of Carpenters, which at that time was housed in the neighbourhood. In recognition of the courage of the men, the Doge Candiano granted them permission to fix their own reward. They replied that they had no further request to make than that he should undertake to pay a visit every year, on the 2nd of February, to their small and then unattractive church. "But suppose it should be a rainy day," said Candiano, with a smile. "O, we will supply hats," answered the carpenters. "But suppose I should be thirsty!" continued the Doge. "O, we will give you enough to drink," was the pledge which the men promptly made in reply. Of course the Doge acceded in the request.

Such is the popular account given as to what was the beginning of the annual festival on Candlemas Day at S. Maria Formosa. For a long period it continued the custom to award dowries on this occasion for twelve poor girls, a number subsequently reduced to three. The festivities are said to have been kept up for eight days. It was during the war with the Genoese in 1379 that the observance of the festival began to fall off, a decadence hastened by the fact that the doings on the holiday became little less than a wild saturnalia. Up to that time, however, it is asserted that the ruling Doge had never failed to fulfil the covenant made by his predecessor Candiano; and, moreover, the carpenters on their part were equally faithful, and every year made a point on the proper day of providing their parish priest with two gilded straw



MONUMENT TO THE SOLDIERS
DROWNED IN 1882.

hats, two bottles of malmsey, and two oranges, which in their name should be presented to the Doge.

As we press on we arrive at the unpretending Calle larga San Marco, and we cannot fail to notice how pleasant and complete are the arrangements of the different cafés, the chairs and tables of not a few being placed in the street itself, and offering enticing invitations to the loungeur and the passer-by. Next we have to pass along by the charming little piazza known as "dei Leoncini," which seems to be nestling against the northern side of San Marco itself. The solid iron rails will be sure to arrest our eye, and we shall be reminded that the richly-decorated sarcophagus they enclose has been erected over the mortal remains of Daniele Manin, the eminent legislator of 1848.

Those two small lions of red marble supporting the monument are perhaps the best productions of their kind in Venice; there is something about them that seems involuntarily to remind us of the wonderful pig in Florence, which Hans Andersen, in his fascinating story, has made familiar even to those who have never had the chance of seeing it *in loco*. But granted that there may be a wide difference between the lions of Venice and the pig of the Arno, there is certainly one use to which they are alike put. The eyes of the police need only be turned away, and as sure as fate the young *gamins* of the town will in a very few moments be seen mounted on the backs of the lions.

From our present position, can we do otherwise than gaze afresh upon the great cathedral, the ever-striking Byzantine structure, rising up before us? Perhaps nothing attracts us more than the mosaics—five in number—which adorn the broad façade. In the one to the right we have represented the embarkation of the body of San Marco, at Alexandria; and that next to it, with a background of gold, shows the disembarkation of the same precious relic at Venice. The central picture can hardly be said to belong to the series, consisting as it does of a representation of the Last Judgment, but the history of the transport of the hallowed remains of the Evangelist is taken up again in the two remaining mosaics on the left, which depict the honourable reception of the body by the dignitaries of the city, with the church in which it was deposited, there to remain, guarded by lock and key in a spot known only to the Doge. Thenceforward was San Marco to become the tutelary saint of Venice and her people.

Until 828 A.D. St. Theodore had been acknowledged as the guardian saint of the city. It is his figure, trampling down the crocodile he had slain, that surmounts the column close at hand. His deposition from his supremacy as patron occurred at a time when, owing to fortunate circumstances, there was an opportunity for the adoption of another patron of yet higher and more powerful influence. So long as the Republic wielded the helm of the state, their political wisdom and sagacity were enough to defy any pretensions of mere right. It was a decision on the part of the ruling powers, for which posterity cannot be otherwise than thankful. Had not St. Theodore's claims been set aside for those of San Marco, there would have been at best merely a St. Theodore's Church, which never could have been the same thing to Venice. It was the result of the recognition of San Marco as the guardian of the city that the brilliant prospects of the state were assured.

How the body of San Marco came to be transported to Venice is told in a popular legend, which may bear repeating. There were two Venetian merchants, both of note—one for his eminent piety, the other for his craftiness. In spite of the prohibition that on no account should their ships be allowed to enter the port of Alexandria, these Venetians, driven, it was avowed, by the fury of a storm, had been compelled to seek refuge, and so found themselves within the harbour. Once in the city, they lost no time in making their way to the Christian church, in which were deposited the remains of San Marco. During the time of their stay they became aware that the church was in considerable danger of being desecrated and destroyed, the Caliph having devised a scheme for building himself a palace, part of his design being to do just what the Venetians themselves did with regard to St. Sophia, namely, to carry off the marble columns that were the ornaments of the sanctuary. "Your church is in jeopardy," pleaded the merchants; "let us have

the body of the holy Evangelist; with us it will be safer than with you; the Doge will pay you well." The custodians of the church hesitated awhile, but ultimately consented—the body should go. It was, however, a hazardous undertaking, and they could only hope that the saint would protect those that ventured upon such a critical task for his sake. Accordingly, in the dead of night the venerated shrine was opened and the body of the Evangelist was drawn out, its



THE ARCO DEL PARADISO.

place being carefully supplied by another body. The rescued remains were laid inside a basket. And now the craftiness of the cunning merchant was adroitly brought into play: he ordered that the rescued body should be covered over with layer upon layer of pickled pork. It was a device to mislead the infidels, who would to a certainty turn away in disgust at the sight of the unclean flesh, and be only too glad for the basket to be carried out of the way. And is not the record confirmed by the mosaic on San Marco? Cannot we there see the picture of this very basket? The officers of the Saracens were baffled by the artifice, and the body of San Marco was successfully conveyed to the transport that was awaiting it. But now, scarcely had the vessel left the port and got out to sea than a violent storm began to rage, and there seemed to be no hope of surviving the hurricane for an hour. In that moment of emergency who should appear but the saint himself! Addressing himself to the captain, he at once instructed him to lower all his sails, and the captain lost not an instant in obeying. The storm ceased; all the difficulties and dangers of the voyage were at an end, and the ship with its precious cargo made a propitious entry into the harbour at Venice. Was it not inevitable that the population of the City of the Lagoons should cease from regarding St. Theodore as their patron and guardian saint, and that henceforth it must be San Marco who should be recognised and esteemed as their great protector on earth, and their advocate before the throne in heaven?





THE TESTOLINI GLASS WORKS AT MURANO.

Industrial Venice.

"It is the hand which produces living art ;
its five fingers are five senses."

A dreamy atmosphere seems to overhang the City of the Lagoons ; but let anyone go the round of the industrial establishments that the city can now show—the last quarter of a century has added marvellously to the number of them—and unless he has known beforehand something of the cause of their increase, he will be utterly astonished at their number. It will be with difficulty that he realizes about many of those palaces, that on the outside seem to rear themselves in proud and dignified silence over the waters of the Grand Canal, that in their interior they are all alive and bustling with the activities of business, and prolific in the manufacture of productions, unrivalled of their kind, which are despatched to and demanded by well-nigh every quarter of the world.

In those time-worn palaces times have changed. It is no longer that a little streak of light is admitted through a narrow crevice to fall upon some faded

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tapestry, or just to reveal some dark ancestral portrait; the full flood of sunshine is welcomed, and the old frescoes from the vaulted roofs smile down upon a fund of treasures until recently unknown. No longer are the halls furnished with war-trophies won in distant climes; the rooms themselves are converted into factories and show-rooms, and are crowded with appliances for manufacturing, and wares produced by the energy and enterprise of modern skill. Venice has learnt to use aright the implements of the current age; and this has not been done by the agency of any Polytechnic school; it has not been forced onward by any material or systematic aid from the government; it has been mainly brought about by the awakened faculties of the people themselves, and the energetic efforts of some few far-seeing and determined individuals. Under these influences the extinct industries have revived, and in their revival have risen to a level which is above that of the best of the previous epochs of Venetian handicraft. It could only be by the application of a dexterity which might be considered as an heirloom from the past, that a body of ordinary workmen have, within a period of about five-and-twenty years, without systematic instruction, and inspired mainly by the study of ancient models, educated themselves up to so high a standard that they may justly be considered as artists.

A volume full of interest might be written upon "Industrial Venice." It may be that such a book will be published some day. We cannot here do more than survey the subject as a whole, and give a rapid glance at Venice in her recently-acquired character as an industrial city.

Suppose we enter the Pisani Palazzo on the Campo San Stefano. It is a colossal structure of the seventeenth century, a building that hardly anyone could pass without being struck by its size. Almost more, perhaps, than any other edifice in Venice, it may give the spectator an illustration of the superabundant ornamentation in which the architects of the late Renaissance delighted, especially when the Baroque style began to prevail. In another respect it is interesting as an example of the good arrangement of the apartments in the residence of old Venetian magnates.

When we find ourselves in the interior of ancient palaces such as these, imagination has its full play. The centuries that are gone seem to come back again as we look upon the walls, once bright with gorgeous tapestries or panelled with sheets of Venetian glass—mirrors in which the forms once reflected may be fancied to be still passing to and fro, retained as a phonograph retains the human voice. It is impossible to gaze upon those regal vaultings and sumptuous draperies without at the same time being reminded of the pride, the wealth, the glory, which once held sway there. The dust of ages may have gathered on them all, but no length of time can deface their individuality; what they were of old, they still remain. As we reflect thus, we may well draw in our breath. We walk beneath the war-trophies in the vestibule; we observe the huge Venetian lanterns as they hang, the very *lampadari*, it is said, that lighted up the craft of the renowned Vettor Pisani himself, the hero of the sea; or again we look up at the ceilings which the genius of Tiepolo—first appreciated in the present century—has covered with some of the noblest of his works; or yet once more we pause to contemplate the ancestral portraits of the Pisani family—these also from the master-hand of

Tiepolo—and fancy that they look down with stoic gaze upon the ebbing and flowing waves of restless time.

Truly a change has come upon the scene. Within these capacious rooms the great firm of Testolini is now carrying on its gigantic business. True *knights of labour* are they in their day. They command no less respect for their achieve-



GIRL STRINGING BEADS AT HOME.

ments than did the warriors painted on the ancient walls. We enter, and in what a bewildering scene we find ourselves! Amidst the countless packing-cases, boxes, rolls, and bales, we might suppose that we had been transported suddenly to the city of London, or to "down-town" in New York, where the traffic in "export and import" is developed on the largest scale. And yet, after all, the spacious vestibule in which we are standing is only used for the mere packing of the merchandise to be despatched.

Owing to the large capital and exceptional opportunities enjoyed by this firm, it may be said to have absorbed all the industries of Venice—"rescued from oblivion," as we have said—thus rendering its name famous throughout the civilized world. From royalty downwards—from the many sovereigns to whom the firm has been appointed purveyors, to the casual traveller who has ever so little to spend upon Venetian nick-nacks—it may be maintained that there is scarcely one, whether he is aware of it or not, who is not a customer of Testolini. No less than ten shops in the Procuratie Vecchie belong to the firm, all full of typical productions of Venetian art. Besides these, on the first floor of the Procuratie Palazzo, there is a suite of more than forty rooms containing costly glass, mosaics, carved furniture, Venetian bronze-work, and iron filigree, all produced in factories belonging to the same firm. The show-rooms are no less than a permanent and free Art Exhibition, of which the interesting character is beyond all question. The rooms are open from morning to evening, and no visitor is under the least obligation to become a purchaser.

As in duty bound, we have thus laid stress upon the indebtedness of Venice to those who have proved themselves such splendid representatives of Venetian art, we may turn and give our attention next to the objects that are exhibited.

In the great entrance-hall, amongst the first things that arrest our notice are a number of life-sized, life-like figures of Moors. These productions, which are necessarily costly, are mainly used as caryatides or candelabra, and are not unfrequently placed to represent door-keepers at a porch or entrance. Although they may be considered as a speciality of Venice, they are, strange to say, frequently sent to distant countries. The custom of having black men as door-keepers or porters dates back to the time when the sea-faring people were accustomed to bring back negroes and negresses, just as they did parrots and monkeys. In the patrician and wealthy families it was the fashion to deck out these black folk in the most gorgeous way, to lade them with bead necklaces, and to make a display of them on all occasions of festivity. With the decline of the Republic the importation of negroes became much more rare, and in the deficiency of the living slaves, the idea was started of replacing them by artificial models; and these in their turn were decorated in the gayest style, dressed in brilliant draperies, and finished off with turbans of costly enamel. The taste for these enamelled figures has continued to the present day, and so far from being limited to the population of Venice, it finds favour in other quarters, so that purchasers are found among visitors of many a nationality.

On leaving the hall, a long vista of room beyond room opens upon our dazzled sight. Soft and subdued in colour are the hangings on the walls, and a perfect sea of splendour is spread around us. Every compartment is a blaze of brightness and colour. The effect of the reflections is quite extraordinary, and when the sun is shining, every room is full of charming studies in light and shade. The first glance—especially in the evening when the electric light has been turned on—is absolutely bewildering. We hardly know what to imagine. We may almost fancy ourselves to be the victims of a strange illusion, the glare flashes upon us from so many different points; it comes from brackets on the wall, from pendants above them, and from every variety of isolated lights.

We remind ourselves ever and again that it is glass and only glass; nevertheless it is a gratification to indulge in flights of fancy for a while and to forget that all these radiant things are but the product of human dexterity. The magic wand that has conjured up this mass of beauty is held

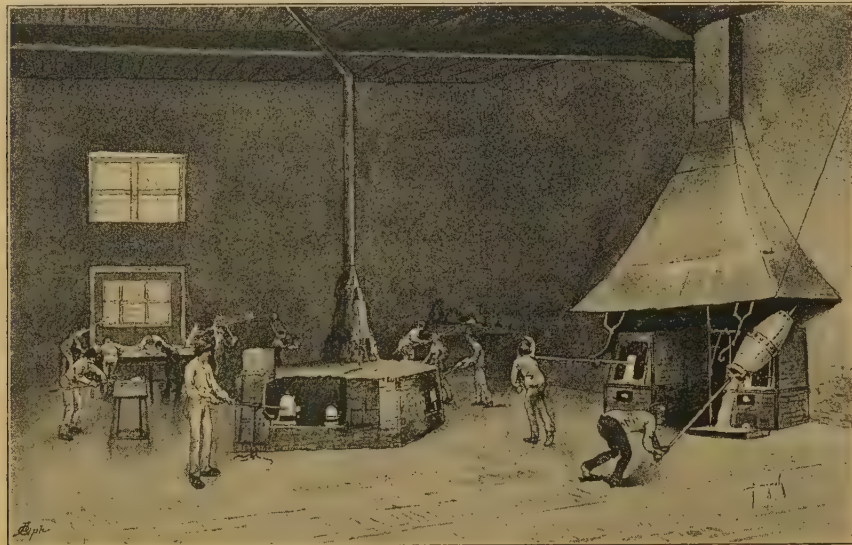


THE SHOW-ROOMS AT TESTOLINI'S.

by the hand of industry. The glass is of every variety of tint—topaz, sea-green, ruby, and opal; the mirrors in mosaic frames of every size and every hue, some light and narrow, and some massive and wide, but all alike throw back the sparkling rays and multiply the truth a hundred-fold; and all this glittering glass, all these glowing mirrors, are the result of the workman's skill, and all bear tribute to the high excellence attained by Venetian art.

In spite, however, of the wealth of imagination represented here, we must not suppose that the solid and the practical have been overlooked. Cups, vases, goblets, drinking-glasses, are seen in infinite variety, and there is no lack of dinner-services or dessert-ware. Amongst the profusion of things that delight the eye there are some cases which are hardly likely to escape our notice; they are lined with glossy satin, white or red or bright blue, and imbedded within them are charming specimens of ceramic art; you close the lid, and find the leather case fitting exactly to the proper size, each one precisely what is requisite to protect the choice contents, so that it may be sent, safe from fear of injury, wherever the purchaser may desire.

There is another picture. Year after year the spinning out of glass into fibres fine enough to be employed for every kind of plaited work is constantly going on. Some years ago the Queen of Italy ordered for herself a complete



BEAD-MAKING AT MURANO.

costume of this material, and it was a production as wonderful as it was beautiful.

Attempts have been repeatedly made elsewhere to imitate the glass that is so beautifully worked at Venice, but hitherto the results have never been able to rival those achieved at Murano. In the time of the Republic, the glass-blowers and mosaic-workers were pledged never to divulge the secrets of their craft. Now, however, there is no more secrecy observed in Venice than in other places, either as to the materials employed or to the methods of manipulation. There is, however, a dexterity, inherited as it were from the past, and carried on by tradition for centuries, which cannot be imparted to the outsider.

It is much the same in the case of mosaic work. For the edification of any visitors who choose to look on, the smelting furnaces at the different establishments are so arranged that the mosaic-making may be watched; but

although there is this open exhibition of the methods of production of this interesting and antique work, there has been no real or satisfactory effort to imitate it elsewhere. Were such an attempt made, it is not likely to prove remunerative, for it would be impossible to find elsewhere such an abundance of suitable material combined with the dexterity of workmanship acquired by long practice.



A LACE-MAKER.

Nor is it different with filigree iron work, or wood-carving. The Testolini firm is *facile princeps* in the trade, and their carved furniture has competed not unsuccessfully with the best productions of France. Venetian jet-work, too, takes first rank everywhere.

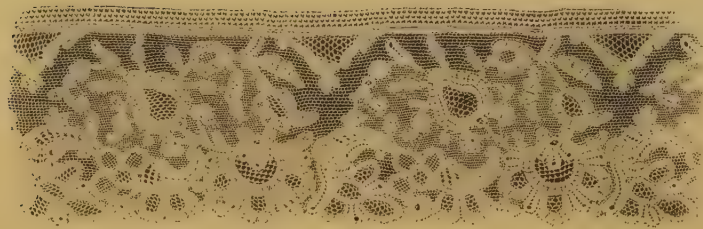
Of modern lace-work and the reproduction of fabrics resembling those of antiquity, it is equally needless to speak. The manufacture of both is now brought to such a degree of perfection that they will not only bear comparison with, but might not unfairly be said to surpass the specimens preserved from the

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days of Venetian supremacy, preserved in churches, palaces, and not infrequently in public and private collections.

The art of metal-casting, too, has been revived, as well as the production of Venetian majolica ware, which, though by no means so much sought after as the Tuscan, has received a considerable impulse, the productions of Ponte di Brenta having already acquired a reputation far beyond the borders of Italy.

In her industries too, then, Venice may be said to be unique. There is not a place in the world where the workmen pursue their occupation under similar conditions; nowhere else do craftsmen work in such grand old halls, within walls enriched with silken draperies, and beneath ceilings adorned with frescoes by the hand of masters in their art. And if it be an axiom in psychology that environment must exercise a great influence on the human mind, the environment surrounding the Venetian craftsmen must be equally effective. In fact, the conditions of their daily work must tend to make them genuine *artists*; and it is with real artistic instinct that they extemporise the fantastic forms of the glass they mould, and devise the elaborate designs they carve. If the man who has the intelligence and skill to produce a work of art from raw material is an artist, surely the glass-blower or the wood-carver equally deserves that title. To him no fixed and definite pattern is prescribed, no model is set before him which he must obsequiously follow; he is informed of the style and of the date of what is wanted, and is then left entirely to himself. It is his own taste and his own imagination which ensure his success, and by adhering to the traditions he has inherited, he is enabled to make every fresh production of his hands in its way unique.





THE FONDAMENTA DELLÉ ZATTERE.

Walks in Venice.

II.

"All nature overflowed with joy; the very stones in the street glowing beneath its influence."

We will now suppose that since our previous walk we have had a night's rest. Moreover, we will take it for granted that that night's rest was good; for those who sleep in Venice, where the silence is so deep, and the window-shutters prevent all noise from penetrating, ought to sleep as no others can.

It is consequently with a renovated strength that we may set out upon a second tour of investigation, and need have no misgiving but that we shall meet with much that is full of interest and surprise. Again we must stop where we can to give some attention to the countless works of art which ought never to be overlooked, but we may try to give an especial regard to certain matters of detail upon which guide-books in general are not found to supply much information. Unknown to many of the Venetians themselves, and consequently unheeded, are many of the curiosities of ancient art and architecture, and to expatiate upon them all would require volumes. However, we may remember the proverb which says that "Whoever seeks will find," and may accordingly believe that, if we search in earnest, we shall not be without reward.

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Very soon we find ourselves in the Campo San Maurizio and the Campo San Stefano. These are both large and beautiful piazzî, and they contain various handsome edifices, but they resemble in their general character the majority of other thoroughfares that they can hardly be said to demand any further notice here. In front of us is the Ponte di Ferro, or Iron Bridge; we cross over it, lamenting that it should be so lacking in elegance of design and so utterly unworthy of the charming scenery that surrounds it. We may well feel constrained to pause awhile; there is something almost entrancing in the dazzling brightness of the early summer morning. The more we gaze, the more difficult it is to withdraw; the sunlight seems to bathe everything so perfectly that the dust of earth disappears.

We now arrive at the Accademia di Belle Arti, a structure that, in a double sense, has much significance. Not only does it afford boundless enjoyment by the exhibition of a collection of paintings and other productions of renowned fame and unsurpassed merit, but gives us an idea of the origin and progressive development of Venetian art. The artists here represented by their drawings, paintings, or sculptures, include nearly all the most celebrated men of the past. In addition to those of the Venetian school, are the works by the masters of Florence and the Netherlands, and the collection must be recognised as being as rich as it is extensive.

But although we cannot spare time now to give any attention to the contents of the Academy, we must just stop to glance for a moment at the cortile of this remarkable building, to which the addition made by Palladio in 1552 has given some likeness to an ancient Roman erection; the rest, which is in the Gothic style, reveals what its earlier use has been. It was in 1807 that the monastery of S. Maria della Carità was suppressed, and together with the Scuola, which had the same dedication, was transformed into a gallery of art, the Austrian government deserving much credit for establishing an institution which did much to aid the revival of art in Venice. Up to that date there were only a few private and detached academies, founded and supported by resident patricians, in a city now celebrated for its painters. As an example it may be mentioned that in 1670 a nobleman, whose name is not recorded, placed his commodious house at San Trovaso at the disposal of young and rising artists, allowing them to copy or make plaster casts of statues and other antiquities, which he delighted to bring back with him from his foreign tours. On Sundays and festivals a number of artists and men of science were accustomed to assemble at his house and mutually discuss all matters connected with geometry, optics, architecture, painting and perspective. The association was called the "Filaleti."

In the year 1755 Padua, foremost in the art revival, made an especial plea for the establishment of a public Academy of Fine Arts in Venice. The proposal was favourably entertained by the Senate, but the composition of the statutes occupied such a length of time that it was the year 1771 before the approved plan became a reality. With the fall of the Republic the life of the institution began to languish, and its reputation to die away. It is said, however, that even during its short existence the art-school was most indifferently supplied with models from the antique, a deficiency which was generously, but only partially, supplied by



THE CAFÉ ALLA CALCINA (ON THE ZATTERE).

the wealthy and intellectual Abbate Farsetti, who on his various travels had collected a considerable number of valuable statues and other works of art, caused them to be exhibited in his Farsetti Palace, and made them freely accessible to all art-students. The Abbate, however, died, and his death was followed before many years were over by that of his cousin and heir, Daniele Farsetti, the result being that the new Academy was closed. The next heir, Antonio, the grand-nephew of the munificent Abbate, parted in the most reckless way, often for most trifling sums of money, with all the treasures that had been gathered together, and had been of such admirable service to the students who had used them as their models. A few statues and other miscellaneous works of art that could not be removed remained, and these were purchased by the Emperor Francis II. of Austria, in August, 1805, for the enrichment of the Accademia di Belle Arti, which was to be opened two years later; and there they have remained ever since.

While we have been recalling these various associations of the place and its surroundings, we have been proceeding a considerable distance farther on our way. There are two paths, one on each side of the Academy, either of which is attractive. We decide upon turning to the left, as apparently better adapted for the purpose we have in view, and perhaps feeling ourselves enticed in that direction by an invigorating whiff of fresh air from the open expanse of water not far off. Having passed along a street planted with trees, and comparatively wide for a thoroughfare

of Venice, called after the Jesuit monks "Ai Gesuati," we find ourselves on one of the finest of all the promenades of the city, the Zattere, which runs from the Calle del Vento to the Salute, alongside the Canal della Giudecca. It may be fairly said that the Zattere is not only a rival to the Riva degli Schiavoni, but in some respects its superior. On a sunny day, even in the depth of winter, the long quay will provide the lounge with a perfect sun-bath; indeed it may be regarded in its idyllic gaiety as a set-off against the melancholy aspect that Venice presents in her lonelier parts. There can be little doubt, however, that it is a scene that passing visitors often neglect. The fine broad strip of shore bordering the lagoon derives its name of Zattere from the rafts that still, as they did in by-gone days, float along the calm green Canal della Giudecca, conveying the wood from the forests of the mainland along the Brenta or the Po, and supplying Venice either with piles as foundations for her water-logged houses, or with fuel.

This superb quay stretches in one continuous line from the Fondamenta San Sebastiano to the Punta della Dogana. From the shore opposite the broad expanse of water rises a series of stately buildings, some palaces, some churches, interspersed with pretty, comfortable-looking residences, every one of them with a garden of more or less extent at the back.

All the great steamships, including those from Africa and from India, lie to at the Zattere; and in addition to these there are sure to be many merchant-ships of every tonnage and sailing vessels of every build, from distant ports, at anchor in the Giudecca. In the distance gleam the Churches of San Giorgio and San Redentore; and we can also see the luxuriant gardens of the Island of

Giudecca, and further to the west the purple mountains, which seem to emerge from the water's edge.

Business flourishes on the Zattere. The unloading of coffee, calico and caroobs is going on incessantly, and what is far less agreeable, the unpacking of the none too fragrant cod-fish. The sales here are all wholesale, so that there are no shops on the quay. Amateur sketchers and artists are rarely missing from the locality. There is much for them all to see and learn from the ever-changing tones of colour which tinge the objects all around, as well as from the combinations, always picturesque, which the houses, gardens, shrubberies, and water close at hand form with the more distant islands



MONKS.



of the Venetian Archipelago. The artists' "trattoria," known amongst them as the Calcina, in a romantic little garden, and not far from it the thorough Venetian little café, which on a summer's evening extends its hospitality far along the banks of the water, are both very favourite resorts.

Leading from the Zattere are several ways into the labyrinthine passages of Venice. We decide to turn into the Calle del Vento, and so reach the Fondamenta San Sebastiano, in which, of course, we also find the Church of San Sebastiano. It was here that Paolo Veronese was buried, and the church can boast of possessing a goodly number of his most valued paintings. From the twenty-seventh to the thirty-first year of his age he was employed, by the prior, to adorn the walls of the building. It was very probably due to this commission that Paolo Caliario came from Verona to Venice, where he depicted the city in its glory, and gained for himself a world-wide reputation. Seen from the outside the church is quite unpretentious, but some of the pictures that embellish the interior are master-pieces by Veronese. Amongst them are the "Martyrdom of S. Sebastian" and the "Martyrdom of SS. Mark and Marcellinus." One of the altar-pieces is a powerful picture by Titian, and a circumstance that gives it an exceptional interest is that it was painted when the artist was in his eighty-sixth year. The mortal remains of Paolo Veronese lie just below a bust of him, and a Latin inscription certifies the fact.

From this church we pass through a little piazza that has almost a rural character, and brings us to the Church of San Angelo Raffaele, which is another monument of art. The sculptured fountain in the middle of the Campo San Angelo Raffaele is by Marco Arian, of the date of 1349, and is one of the only two well-authenticated works by him in Venice. Hardly any church enjoys a greater popularity than San Angelo, and the piazza is from time to time bright with the festival processions crossing it. The ceremonial observed with the keenest zest, and therefore the most attractive, takes place on St. John the Baptist's day, which falls on the 24th of June. A considerable number of little children from two to four years of age are dressed up in lambskins, lavishly adorned with flowers, and each provided with a candle that, like themselves, is gay with blossoms and coloured ribbons. Many of them wear dazzling crowns upon their heads, and



PROCESSION ON ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S DAY.

personate the infant Baptist. In this way they form a leading feature in the procession, which is certainly very imposing.

The neighbourhood round San Raffaele and near S. Nicolo dei Mendicanti is one of the poorest, and at the same time one of the most characteristic, in Venice. The little church of San Nicolo has not been without its significance in the history of the lagoons, inasmuch as it gave the name of the "Nicolotti" to the residents within its parochial bounds, to whom reference has been made on a previous page as the sworn foes of the Castellani, and the eager partakers in the Herculean sports there described.

At this end of the city more than anywhere else we realize that Venice is actually an island traversed by navigable canals, which the great and mighty have at intervals adorned with buildings, most of them ranking as works of art.

In times gone by, the Nicolotti were accustomed to distinguish themselves from the rest of the Venetians by a costume of their own. Like the Castellani, they were for the most part fishermen or sailors, and each had his own proper badge by which he might at once be recognised. Black caps and black scarves round the waist were the symbols adopted by the Nicolotti, the Castellani being known by their red caps and girdles.

What could be more diversified and interesting than the view we obtain from here? The aspect of the lagoon itself is very striking. Here lies a



Tungie
Pugonig 6

AN OLD FISHERMAN.

v



A VENETIAN GIRL.

solitary boat opposite a weather-beaten building ; there we see a dull, gloomy, almost awe-inspiring sotto-portico ; here is a little altar tastefully decked out with flowers, in the midst of squalid surroundings where we should least expect to find it, with a lighted taper burning before the image of the Madonna. Here, too, are women making and mending nets, just as might be expected in a community of fisher-folk ; and scattered among them are groups of children playing the game they call "Bossolo, bossolo, canarin," the English "Ring a ring of roses," while it is rare to see a single well-dressed personage. Detached tenements there are, each only to be approached by its own shaky footbridge, its sole connection with the mainland ; and amidst it all there is an

extraordinary abundance of verdure cropping out from the nooks and crannies of the ancient masonry, making us wonder whence it can derive the nourishment enabling it to grow so freely. Nor can we fail to notice the unkempt women, who, like the swarming, noisy clusters of children, spend their days entirely in the open air ; amongst whom are always to be seen some of the fascinating beauty which makes artists long to transfer their charms to canvas. In spite of poverty and dirty rags, however, it is hard to meet with one amongst them all who would not proudly refuse to be hired as a model. Such are some of the quaint specialities of a locality within half an hour's reach of the Piazza di San Marco.

We will now return by way of the Fondamenta Rossa to the Ponte dell' Angelo Raffaele. To the artist there can be no lack of interest, so charming and ever-changing are the effects met with at every turn. All at once we become aware that the atmosphere is impregnated with an odour to which, in Venice, we are little accustomed. Our curiosity is so much aroused that with some hesitation we remark to our companion that the smell is uncommonly like that from a cow-house, and are somewhat surprised to be told in reply that not only here at San Raffaele, but likewise all about S. Margherita, there are cow-sheds at which twice a day fresh milk is to be obtained. It then occurs to us that we should like to have a look at a Venetian dairy. We pass through an incredibly narrow alley, and the place is close before us. A dozen cows are munching away at the provender supplied to them, not merely old dry hay, but



THE CAMPO SANTA MARGHERITA.

plenty of fresh-cut clover and other green meat. We order for ourselves a glass of milk that is to come straight from the cow-stalls ; and we go on our way, reproving ourselves for the unwarrantable suspicion we had entertained that Venice could not supply us with a glass of pure water, much less offer us a draught of refreshing milk.

While we are diverting ourselves with desultory observations on the many-sidedness of the City of the Lagoons, we are progressing in our walk, and now we find ourselves opposite one of the most interesting of the numerous palaces of Venice. This is the old Palazzo Cicogna. It really looks as if it were made of lace. Nothing could be much more depressing than the decayed condition of the interior ; but the exterior façade has a grace which might well win the admiration of the connoisseur. Within a gunshot of the dairy, and nearly opposite the principal doorway of the Church of S. Angelo Raffaele, stands this goodly monument of the past, and not an artist will deny that it is a genuine treat to gaze upon it. It is situated on the lengthy Fondamenta Briati, which is picturesquely cut across by a canal of considerable breadth, on both sides of which are various erections ; some elegant residences with well-kept gardens, others palaces with rich and varied historical associations. Amongst the latter are the Palazzo Zenobio (now the Collegio degli Armeni), the Palazzo Foscari, the Vendramin ai Carmini, and not the least remarkable, the Palazzo Moro, commonly called the house of Othello.

Here, as so often happens, we find as we go along either from San Sebastiano or San Raffaele that the monotony of the long and cleanly-kept

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Tony Grubhofer

Fondamenta
S. Marco
D. F. F. F. F. F.

Fondamenta is relieved by some small piazza. On one of these stands a church of high repute known as "I Carmini," whence both the Campo and the adjacent bridge have derived their name. The popularity that the church enjoys is exceptionally great, and is to be largely, if not entirely, attributed to the circumstance of its being dedicated to the Madonna del Carmelo, who is generally supposed to be identical with the Madonna di Loretto. The yearly festival of the Madonna, which is held in the month of July, is observed with especial honour, and is an occasion when the Patriarch of Venice generally attends and himself celebrates High Mass. In former days it was the custom that devotees, both men and women of high and patrician rank, should make a bare-footed pilgrimage to the altar of the Carmini, where a flood of light thrown from two thousand tapers, each as thick as a man's arm, illumined the image of the Madonna, which was every year decorated afresh for the gorgeous ceremonial with jewellery, &c., that those who felt themselves indebted to her for their protection, or desired to be suppliants for her favour, were only too eager to contribute to her honour. The service is prolonged the whole night through; and, as the doors of



S. Giacomo dell'Orto

Tony Grubhofer

the church stand open, the bustle and clamour of the world without can be heard mingling itself with that of the music, the chants and prayers, from mystic recesses of the sanctuary.

It may be taken as granted that every great ecclesiastical festival of this kind is pretty sure to be connected with a fair. The feast of the Holy Virgin di Carmini was not likely to be an exception. Falling in July, when there is no real night, and the weather is sure to be warm, the fair never failed to be the scene of much bustle and merriment. There was a thriving trade to be done by the purveyors of lemonade and the makers of ices, as well as by the dealers in the favourite "frittoli," cooked in hot oil, or by the hawkers of the



THE OGNI SANTE NEAR SAN BARBARA.

fenocchio (fennel), which was an ever-popular delicacy of the season. The tumultuous clamour of countless voices, the mingled effluvia of different odours, the glare of thousands of lights, combined to create a scene of bewilderment which might tax the endurance of the strongest nerves. The processions of the bare-footed pilgrims have indeed dwindled away; but the fun of the fair continues, and in this respect the great Festa is observed now as punctiliously as it was when the church was consecrated to the honour of the Madonna in 1348.

Opposite the side entrance of the church, whence the road leads to the Campo Santa Margherita, which, in extent, is the second of the old piazzi of Venice, we may see the Scuola dei Carmini. This 17th century building is not unworthy of notice: its interior is embellished with frescoes by Tiepolo and Lazzarini; on the day of the annual festival it is thrown open to the public, and never fails to be visited by large throngs of people.

The Campo Santa Margherita is one of those typical Venetian thoroughfares which, to a stranger who is interested in observing the ordinary habits of the people, will disclose more in the course of half an hour's personal investigation than any number of volumes written about it. Moreover, incidents not actually seen in a limited space of time may often be realised by the force of association of thoughts and ideas.

There can perhaps scarcely be a place more suitable for watching the active life going on all around, and reflecting on the associations it suggests, than the Café Santa Margherita. It is an establishment of some pretensions, extending its array of chairs right out into the Piazza, and provided with a capacious marquee, furnished, as occasion requires, with comfortable black leather sofas. On the left we may notice an old tower, blackened with the smoke of years, belonging to the little church which was not improbably originally the Scuola of the adjacent S. Pantaleone. This is now used for two very opposite purposes: partly as a place of worship for the Waldensian community, and partly as the shop of a greengrocer, who lives comfortably under the portico, selling potatoes and carrots, and roasting chestnuts over a charcoal fire to supply the demands of his numerous customers. Altogether the Piazza is unquestionably one of the busiest and brightest spots in the whole city. Is it not a happy coincidence that the clock, like the population, is somewhat behind the time, and that modern luxury has been allowed to make no encroachment upon the primitive simplicity of the crowds that gather on the scene?

The immediate neighbourhood can show several ancient buildings that may repay the artistic visitor's search, and there is, consequently, a choice of four of five excursions that may be made with reference to them. Individual taste will determine which of these is likely to yield the most enjoyment; and perhaps here it had better suffice only to indicate the separate routes that can be chosen. Behind



AT THE MARITTIMA.

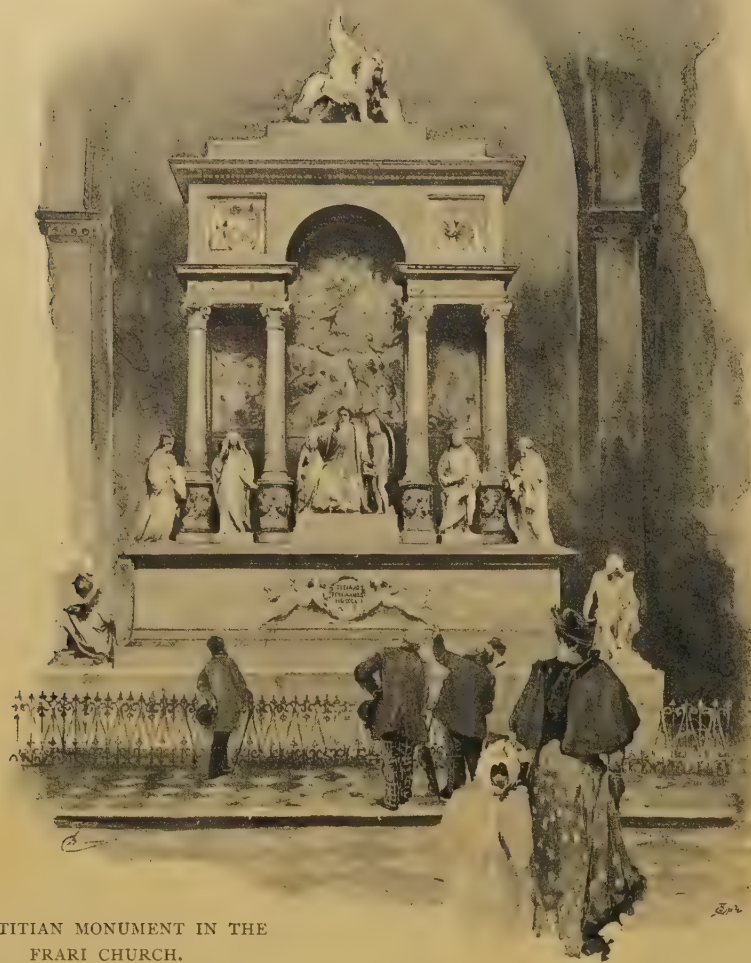


THE SCUOLA SAN ROCCO.

the café of which we have been speaking, there are several minor cross-paths leading back to the Fondamenta Briati, which we quitted but a short time ago.

The inquiring visitor may be advised to continue his course straight along the quay (Fondamenta) commencing at the Church of the Carmini. He ought, however, by no means to omit turning out of his way, again and again, to go through the various "sotto-portici," although he will be quite sensible how extremely uninviting many of them look. Two of these may be mentioned: one opposite the Palazzo Zenobio, and beyond the church called the "Ragusei"; the other, nearer the end of the Fondamenta, known as the "Basego." Passing Maleanton, we soon arrive at a picturesque spot, upon which some handsome buildings have been erected, and thence we proceed till we reach the Fondamenta Marcello. A path leading from it on the right brings us to the Chiesa dei Tolentini, the façade of which has a handsome loggia supported by six fluted Corinthian columns, of the 18th century or late-Greek period. The palaces on the side of the Fondamenta, opposite the church, are large and stately, and the road terminates in the extensive Papadopoli Park, to which reference has been made before; whilst to the right, beyond the Fondamenta Marcello, are houses occupied by the poorer section of the population.

Here, again, if we are in earnest in studying the actual habits of the people, we should make many deviations from the main thoroughfare. Through one or other of the sotto-portici we may make our way to the Campo della Lana, the Calle dei Morti, or the Campiello della Munaghette; or we might make a pilgrimage to Santa Croce, or S. Giacomo del Lorio in the more remote parts of the city, to which the most venerable traditions continue to cling, and where the very inhabitants seem to be survivals of past centuries. Ancient palaces are still standing here, and alternate with the dilapidated remains of private and once



THE TITIAN MONUMENT IN THE
FRARI CHURCH.

wealthy houses. Midway between them the old gardens are yet green with the verdure Nature herself has bestowed upon them, for little is the cultivation they have had ; they might almost be called romantic little wildernesses, so overgrown are they with creepers and overrun by the branches of untended vines. They look pleasant and peaceful, as though they were consciously enjoying the agreeable moisture from the wide lagoon. Near by are alleys where the labouring class are content to dwell, and where girls, yet poorer, in their struggles for a livelihood may be seen day after day working in the open air for ten weary hours, stringing beads upon wire, for which the pay they can obtain from the great enamel-factories is miserably meagre and inadequate. Yet not a few of them are bright and pretty ; they laugh, and sing, enjoy their polenta, and lead virtuous lives. It is melancholy to know that there are many of them quite unable to bear the constant strain upon their eyesight, or to endure the sedentary life ; they grow pale and die, reminding us of Lessing's pathetic line, "The rose is gathered ere the storm has stripped it of its leaves."

Proceeding along the quay that runs down to the Papadopoli Gardens, we come on the left hand to Santa Chiara, and to the brewery that is distinguished by the same name.



MONUMENTS TO CANOVA AND PESARO
IN THE FRARI CHURCH.

We push on again, turning into the nearest cross-road that we may have a glance at the doings on the Marittima. The place is known also as the Molo di Levante, and has a railway of its own for the conveyance of merchandise to the different harbour-basins, docks and storehouses. The bustle here is ceaseless; from early morning till quite late at night all is perpetual movement and activity. To come hither, either from the silence and calm of the Grand Canal, or from any one of the poetic quarters of the city in which we have been rambling, is like being awakened from a pleasant dream, so great is the contrast between the repose of the one and the turmoil of the other. And to the bewildering hurry and constant confusion is added the unpleasant accompaniment of puffs of smoke and clouds of coal-dust from chimneys and locomotives.

Business, during the last two decades, has wonderfully increased both in the export and the import trade, and the development has been beneficial to the

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city in every way. It must be thoroughly understood, however, that the demands of commerce have never been allowed to make any large or even considerable encroachment upon the general beauty that pervades Venice as a whole.

From the Marittima we cross a bridge and come upon a pretty piazza that is



THE STRETTO DI GALLIPOLI
(behind the Frari Church).

almost Dutch in its aspect; this is the Campo Sant' Andrea, the church having the same name and facing the Canal di Marittima. It is only on Sundays and festivals that this church is open for service, and it is attended almost exclusively by sailors. Originally it was the church of a guild of fishermen called the "Burchieri," which was of some importance in the days of the Republic, the duty required of them being to keep the canals clear of mud, and to maintain them in a condition available for navigation, which was then a matter of even greater importance for the well-being of the city than it is at present. This guild was presided over by a number of patrons and patronesses of the highest rank, and in the year 1347, as the historian Cicogna has recorded, it was inaugurated with rites of great solemnity in the presence of an illustrious assemblage. Literally, the word "Burchia" means a covered boat, and suggested the name for the "Burchieri," who (just as

nightmen do in the present day) performed their task under cover of the darkness, always carrying the cargo of refuse a considerable distance out to sea. A bas-relief at the entrance-door of the church represents their vocation as being under the protection of St. Andrew.

A pretty, though small, piazza, which is partly planted with trees, leads to the Fondamenta dei Cereri. As its name signifies, it is the quarter of the candle-

makers, and the air all around is impregnated with the odour of melting wax. The neighbourhood is gradually losing its original rural character, and is becoming more and more the resort of business men; already there are to be seen an iron foundry, a cement factory, and some extensive wine-stores, but there are still various remains of the stately old palaces, which rise from the canal, and give a pleasant variety to the scene.



SCUOLA OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA.

The shortest way back will lead us past a picturesque spot, known as "ai Tre Ponti," whence we may proceed to the pleasant Fondamenta Rossa, bordered with gardens on either side. Glimpses of this kind make pleasant breaks in what may be called the dramatic scenery of Venice, for there is no denying that there is something quite theatrical in the effect of the irregular conglomeration of houses all along the thoroughfares, where in one place we see the cement crumbling off, eaten up by the salt in the atmosphere, and in others the painted decorations fading away, when they have escaped total obliteration.

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THE PALAZZO DORIA.

people should venture to pass along it together in opposite directions, as a collision would certainly result.

The Frari Church is the Pantheon of Venice. For even the most cursory and superficial inspection of it, a quiet uninterrupted hour is required. Not only does it contain the monuments of many eminent men who are buried here, but there are numerous portraits and pictures that must detain attention. First we must name the Mausoleums of Pesaro and Titian, and what, perhaps, in an artistic sense will be accounted more important still, the Monument to Canova. It is said that, at a short period before the death of the great sculptor, he had received a commission from a citizen to execute an elaborate monument such as this, but that when it was completed, it proved too costly for the means of the intending purchaser, and consequently remained upon the hands of the artist. When Canova died shortly afterwards, his pupils insisted that the noble production should be dedicated to the master's own memory, and they succeeded in carrying their point. It was in Venice, in the year 1822, that Canova died. A tablet, on which the event is recorded, is affixed to the house in which he was resident at the time; it is in the Campo San Gallo, behind the Procuratie Vecchie.

Close to the Frari Church stands the Archivio Veneto, which may justly claim to contain one of the most magnificent collections of state archives in the world. The documents, some of them dating back to the year 883, have been

Before turning on to this Fondamenta, which has so cheerful an aspect, if we go straight on we should reach the "Crosera di San Pantaleone," or as the word is pronounced, "the Crosera." Thence, by way of the Campiello delle Mosche, we shall come to the Colonnade behind the Scuola di San Rocco, one of the theatrical-looking objects to which I have referred, and we shall note how rich they are in works of art. The façade of the Scuola is a masterpiece of the Lombard school, dating from 1524, and the fantastic capitals of the pillars are considered fine examples of the grotesque.

On the way from San Rocco to the Frari Church we pass the so-called "Straits of Galipoli."* The Stretto di Galipoli is one of the narrowest alleys in the whole of Venice — so narrow, indeed, that no two stout

* In the Venetian dialect Galipoli, but Gallipoli in the Calabrian.



THE MONUMENT TO PESARO IN THE FRARI CHURCH.

computed to be about fourteen millions in number, which are preserved in three hundred different apartments.

In a narrow street just opposite, out of sight of the general thoroughfare, is the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista, which is certainly worthy to be called one of the best of the crown jewels of architecture of which Venice may be so justly proud.

If we want to go towards the Rialto, we may take the road leading past the Church of St. Thomas. The locality all around is pleasant, and we can scarcely fail to admire the picturesqueness of the background to the lofty trees made by the venerable walls. Yonder, between the Frari and San Toma; is an exceptionally narrow pathway that will lead us to the Ponte di Donna Onestà, "the bridge of the honourable wife," with which a well-known tale of blood is associated.

At a short distance from this spot is the land entrance to the Palazzo Foscari. The cortile of this palace will repay inspection, as does that of so many others, those of the Rezzonico, the Giustinian, or the Pesaro, for instance, which

all take first rank. A visit, however transient, to these remarkable and, in a certain sense, patriarchal residences of the old Venetian nobility will aid us in gaining a more intelligent appreciation of their history and a more vivid insight into the times when their owners were still powerful.



RIO TERRA
CATECUMENI

Tony Grubhofer

Once more we are standing, like Hercules, at the meeting of the roads, and hesitate as to the way by which we shall reach the centre of the city. Avoiding the stations of the traghetti and steamboats, we hesitate between the two streets that seem equally inviting. We make our choice at last, deciding to follow the one which will bring us by the shortest way to the Piazza di San Marco. By way

of the Campiello dei Squellini, and across the Calle delle Botteghe, we come out upon the Fondamenta Rezzonico, and thence to the Campo San Barbara. It may not be necessary, perhaps, to turn into the long, almost endless Calle Lunga, beginning as it does at the Traghetto San Barbara, and only terminating at the sunny Fondamenta Zattere, although no doubt many characteristic scenes of daily life might be seen in the numerous side-streets we pass. We must persevere in keeping on through a long series of the narrow alleys, one fitting into another in a way which reminds us again of our former illustration of a



A FRUIT-STALL.

stove-pipe. The entrance to this characteristic corner baffles description. It is on the right-hand side of the Church of St. Barnabas. When we have passed through the narrow Calle del Laganegher we shall have to cross a little bridge, and on whichever side we look shall have a very pretty view of the canal. No great distance further on we come to a cross-way, the Calle dei Cerchieri, very narrow like the rest of its class, and looking interminable. Two steps are, however, sufficient to take us across it, and we then enter a cramped-up tunnel which is known as the Calle della Toletta. Our course has been zigzag and perplexing enough, but whenever we have come upon any of the bridges, we have had a welcome and agreeable break in the monotony of our progress.

As we press on, our notice will perchance be attracted by some tiny little altar. It is a poor thing in itself—a mere shrine of the cheapest construction, unworthy of the smallest and remotest village—but as the crude coarse picture that surmounts it is decorated with paper flowers, it betokens that some festival of the Virgin is at hand.

The Calle della Toletta here becomes wider, and we quickly find ourselves upon the Fondamenta Priuli, which a little further on leads to San Trovaso, an especially favourite part of Venice with artists. It is no wonder that they should flock to the fascinating spot, which, always charming, is at its best perfection in the soft glow of the early summer sun.

Pressing on along the Calle Contarini-Corfù, we are again at the Iron Bridge, which was the starting point of our first excursion.



THE RIO SAN BARNABA
(with the Campanile San Barnaba).

As we have observed, however, there was a second route from the Frari or San Toma, by which we might return without using either steamboat or traghetto. Yet, first, while we are on the bridge, we shall do well to avail ourselves of the opportunity of going past San Vio behind the Academy to the Fondamenta Bragadin. This is a delightfully airy quarter, full of light and with a good outlook, and consequently the resort of many

Venetian painters, who have their studios there. It is a highly interesting district; through it we pass by way of the Fondamenta Baccalà to San Gregorio, the old Abbazia, to the Catacumeni, and to the back of the Salute. On the right extensive views are to be obtained across the Canal della Giudecca, and on the left we have the Grand Canal itself.

Starting either from the Frari or from S. Toma, which is practically very much the same, we come to the Rio Terra dei Nomboli, past the house in which Goldoni was born—though not that in which he lived. Proceeding along the Calle dei Saoneri, or the street of the soap-boilers, we reach San Polo, and it may well surprise us to note how many handsome palaces there are in these inland quarters of the city, as well as on the canals. We turn next into another narrow passage, which we know is the most direct way



APPROACH TO THE RIALTO BRIDGE.



AT THE VEGETABLE MARKET.

to what is now our goal, namely, "the high shore," the Rivo-Alto, universally renowned as the Rialto. Having passed through an arched gateway on the left, we are again enticed to make a short *détour*, to see what we can in the Calle della Furatola. Keeping straight on, we ere long find that we have entered one of the oldest and most curious, and consequently one of the most fascinating, parts of the city. Here is the Palazzo Albrizzi, to which belongs a considerable historical interest, because during the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth century it was regarded as the intellectual centre of Venetian society. By taking this path we have also come upon a place known as the "Vecchia Posta." It is now a wine vault, and has the reputation of dealing in the best and purest wines. It is the resort of tourists of many nationalities, who, in their eagerness to carry away souvenirs with them, have not hesitated to chip piece after piece off the ancient doorway. Here it was that in the time of the Republic the unwieldy old post-boats used to have their station, coming thrice a week to collect the correspondence of the inhabitants and convey it to Mestre, whence it could be despatched anywhere inland. There can be no question but that this part of Venice, behind and around the Rialto, exceptionally old as it is, is well worth exploring; we come quite unexpectedly upon buildings with various interesting features, and which for the most part are unknown to strangers. Just opposite the Ponte Raspi there is the Palazzino Raspi, an edifice that dates from the thirteenth century, and deserves a passing notice. Not far from it in the old days stood the "Antico Palazzo Querini," the site of which is now known by the abbreviated name of Stallon, and set apart as a poultry market.

The whole of this district near the Rialto, including such places as the Ruga degli Grefici, the Ruga degli Speziali, and the Campo delle Beccherie, is extremely rich in historical reminiscences, and to a contemplative mind cannot be otherwise than suggestive of the mutability of all earthly institutions.

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Venice has been called a dead city, and it must be acknowledged that there are parts which might seem to justify the assertion; but whoever is familiar with the locality of the Rialto, either in the early morning or in the closing hours of the evening, will be bound to confess that nowhere else could he point to a scene where more brightness, activity, and life are compressed within so limited a compass. Buyers and sellers, dawdling loungers and bustling men of business, men, women, and children, make their way about amidst the promiscuous conglomeration of the goods being offered for sale by dealers of every imaginary class. But yet there is no jostling, no pushing, no violence. The idlers no more interrupt the busy than the busy interfere with the idlers. Yell and gesticulate they will, but every one gets his word; and nowhere in Venice is the character of the people more definitely or more prominently displayed than here.

The great civil virtue of discipline is utterly wanting. But discipline is stiff and stern, inartistic and levelling; and however appropriate for many circumstances, it is of necessity wearisome and irritating. Here on the contrary all is free, not artificial in any way, and therefore full of artistic effect. What an intolerable scene of roughness would these motley crowds present, with all their diversified interests and pursuits, if tolerance, inoffensiveness and unconscious urbanity (the outcome of more than a thousand years of intercourse with other nations and other races) were not innate in the blood of the Venetians! What would have become of Venice (*Venezia la Bella*), with all her darksome recesses, her holes and corners, and with all her lagoons, often so silent and so eerie, if the hearts of her people had not been naturally gentle? What would have befallen her, with her labyrinth of ill-lighted thoroughfares, where the stillness is as the stillness of the grave, if the virtues of patience and tolerance had not influenced the temper of her population?

Beyond any other, Venice might seem to be a city signally adapted for robbery and for murder, yet nowhere are deeds of violence so rare; it may be, indeed, that from time to time one boisterous tippler at a tavern, in a drunken bout, may wound another, but from year's end to year's end no case occurs of murderous assault. Even thefts seem limited to the most trifling and insignificant property; you may hear of articles of clothing being purloined when they have been put out to dry and left without protection; or a sack of maize or beans may be carried off from a store incautiously left open; or minor depredations will be made at toll and custom houses, but it is seldom that dishonesty on a serious scale occurs. All this redounds to the honour of Venice. The stranger, by night as by day, may go whither he will, even to the remotest and most deserted quarters of the city, without a shadow of misgiving as to his safety or the slightest apprehension that he may be exposing himself to insult.



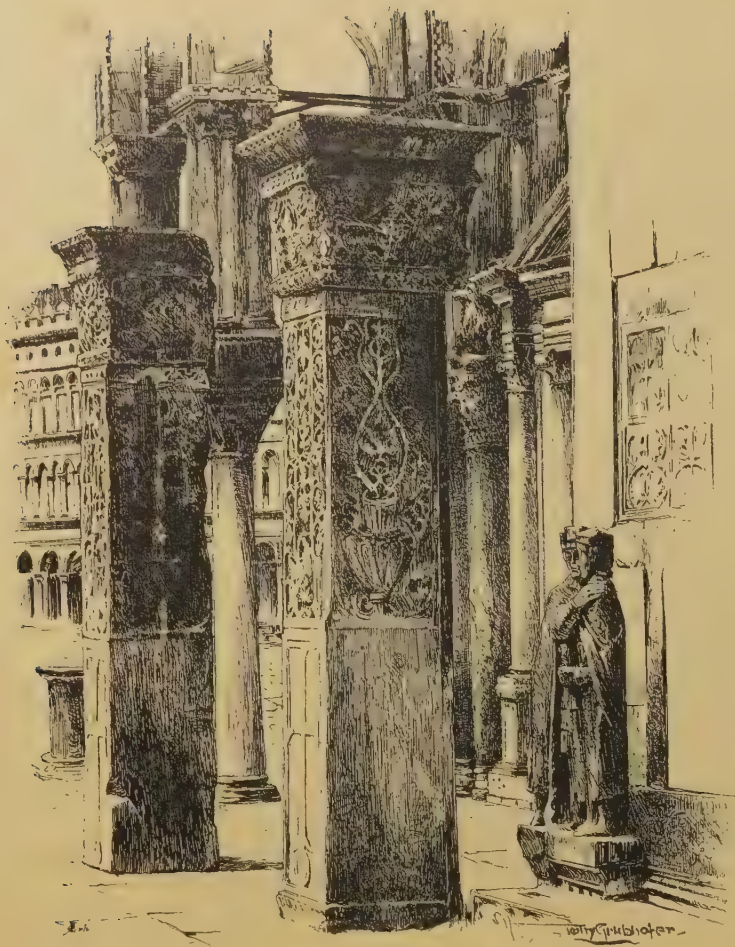
The Palace of the Doges.

"Nor East nor West, nor North nor South shall stand
Before the might of my imperious hand."

"Vinetia, Vinetia, chi non ti vede, non ti pretia": such are the Italian words that Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Holofernes in *Love's Labour Lost*—words that with equal justice may be applied to the Palace of the Doges. Whoever has not actually seen it can form but an inadequate conception of what this stateliest of all the structures of Venice really is. It demands no little resolution to deal with such a giant in the world of architecture, especially when what is to be said must be compressed within the scanty limits of only a few pages. May we not betake ourselves to some of the elaborate treatises on art and thence extract the glowing paragraphs that heap eulogium on eulogium upon the wondrous pile? This might be well worth considering, but would hardly help us for our present purpose.

It would be presumptuous to attempt to explain to such as are unversed in the science of architecture what are the true claims of the Ducal Palazzo to their reverence and admiration. Of course, all the world will call it beautiful, and it is little short of an universal tradition that its beauty, if not unequalled, is yet unsurpassed. Truly all who see it must endorse this opinion, but it must not be forgotten that it owes very much of the grandeur of its general effect to its unique position.

A A 2



DETACHED COLUMNS
(In front of the Ducal Palazzo).

However uninitiated he may be in the technicalities of art, the visitor will be sure to break forth into excited exclamations of rapture. "How beautiful! how grand! how marvellous! how magical! how divine!"

And what are we to say more? Are we to create fresh expressions of admiration? Are we to invent new phrases of laudation and of wonder? This is not easy. There was a young Parisian lady, charming in her person, faultless in her attire, who, coming to gaze upon the structure, was anxious to pose as a connoisseur in art, and succeeded in inventing a new and original epithet of commendation. Standing before the palace, and surveying it with her eye-glass at the end of a long handle, she delivered herself of the rapturous exclamation:

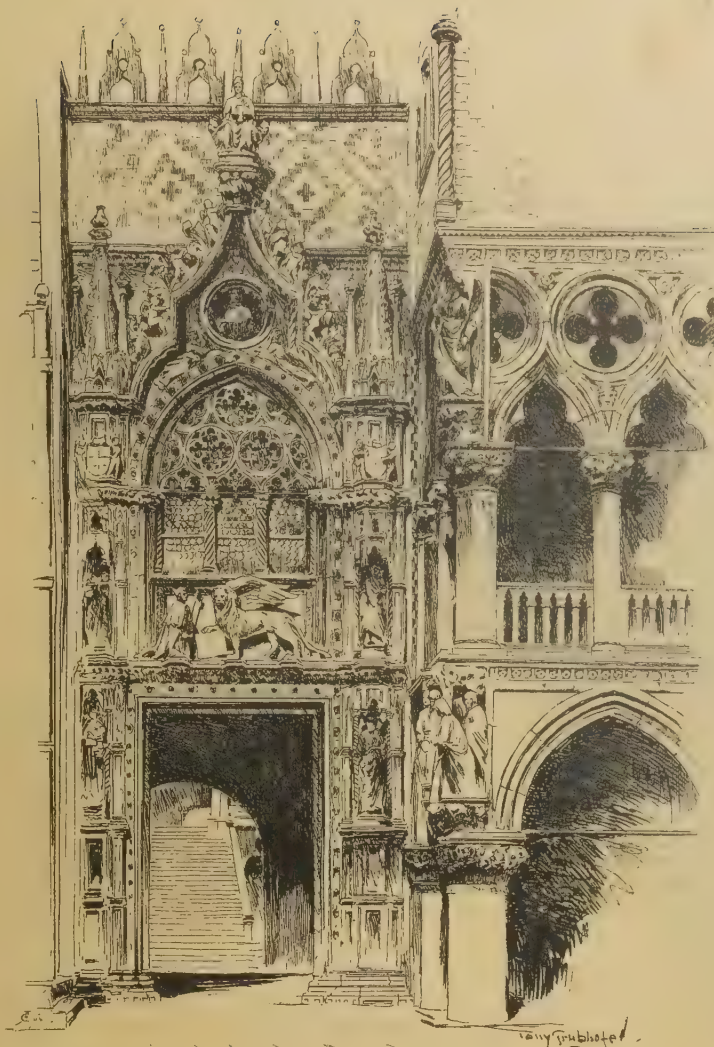
"Ah! le Palais Ducale a du cachet!" Like so many now travelling for enjoyment from place to place, she had no higher compliment to pay; it was the best word of praise she had at her command; the palace had "cachet" or style; and with this compliment the building might be well content.

Now, this long preamble of ours has not been without a purpose. We have wished to exonerate ourselves from being included amongst that numerous indiscriminate class who are always pouring forth their empty, lavish words upon details which they are incapable of appreciating. The general effectiveness of the palace is the result of the harmony of its separate details. To make an inspection of these, without a guide or text-book, trusting solely to our own eyes, will be an occupation full of interest, and one which will bring its own reward. It is all-essential, however, that our time should be sufficiently at our disposal to permit us to give our attention to individual points of beauty as well as to their united effect. To be hurried is to mar the enjoyment and destroy the value of the examination altogether. Anything like an attempt to grasp the various features all at once is as unreasonable as to expect that a single hour would suffice to master all the science of a comprehensive text-book. Modern travellers are too often in a state of hurry-scurry and desperate haste. Elaborate and complicated works such as this palace cannot be disposed of in this off-hand manner; their fine qualities must be treated as are strong medicines, not swallowed all at once, but in moderate doses, if they are expected to have a beneficial effect.

It may, however, be rejoined that it is not every one who has leisure thus to enjoy deliberately the luxury of travel; it is the privilege, it is urged, of but one amongst many, and so it comes to pass that the majority must fail to get more than a hasty and superficial impression. To these it should be the source of the highest satisfaction to be sure that they would elsewhere search in vain for any production that has been wrought by human hands more adapted to awaken in them the best and highest emotions of the soul. The Doges' Palace as it stands there is powerful in effect, impressive in solemnity; it makes its appeal equally to the daring flights of imagination and to the solid convictions of reason. It may be claimed for it that it satisfies all sense of art, which is more than can be asserted of its neighbour, the curious, all-admired, but too capricious Church of St. Mark. If the homely comparison may be allowed, there is here a combination of ingredients, mixed in such harmony of proportion as to compose a draught palatable to all tastes; it pleases alike the quiet thinker and the enthusiast; it charms the thoughtful student and the enraptured poet; it fascinates the architect by its design, the historian by its associations; it gratifies the cultivated artist by its outlines, it gains the approval of the ordinary workman who knows good work when he sees it.

What has thus been said as to the external aspect of the marvellous structure will also apply in great measure to the diversified character of the interior. Allusion has already been made to the many different purposes to which the inner halls and corridors have been applied.

Apart from all else, the very magnitude of the design is a sort of tribute to that human vanity which is the inheritance of us all. The impressions that we receive may be different in their origin, their degree, or their character, but no one could stand in that cortile, in its grey and dignified solemnity, or walk through those apartments, stately and striking in their proportions, without a sense of pride in what has been achieved by the master hands of the past; although, of course, to those who have been admitted into the inner sanctuary



THE CHIEF ENTRANCE TO THE DOGES' PALACE.
(Porta della Carta.)

of art, the enjoyment will be infinitely more keen, and the appreciation of the setting of the gem will be more real.

It is an era of greatness and prosperity that will rise up before the vision of those who contemplate these halls while they seek to realise how they came into existence, and what they are. Propitious fortune must have favoured the undertaking: not simply such fortune as smiles on individuals, but a fortune in which the whole nation shared. Such good fortune was the lot of Venice for centuries; and it may be well imagined that Fortune and Minerva united as patronesses together, to give happy auspices for the promotion and completion of a structure, which, made up of various and distinctive elements, has yet come forth as such a gorgeous and harmonious whole.

And here I think we may well refer to one who may be said to have thrown an altogether new light upon the Palace of the Doges. After long and conscientious study of many of the archives of the State, documents all of them difficult of access, and many of them more difficult to decipher, Camillo Boito, an Italian architect, gave the world the result of his patient and laborious work in a volume which he called "*Gite di un Artista*" ("*Travels of an Artist*"), and it is from this that we take the following instructive extract.

"It is," writes Boito, "alike the intellect and the senses that are aroused by the sight of this building. Imagination wanders away into the infinite, the intellect is satisfied, taste revels in the perfect harmony, the martial sentiment rejoices at the daring boldness of the stone-work, the heart is gratified by the elegance of the details, the fancy is delighted with the allegories, and the symbolist with the emblematic figures (fruits, animals, or monstrosities) which project from the foliated capitals, reminding us of nothing so much as of the giant leaves of the cabbage in the fable, out of which jumped soldiers, fairies, and children.

"The building is a living organism: it owns a heart; it has blood that courses through its veins, and to its utmost limits and remotest corners it is pervaded with nerves. The Palace of the Doges is the incarnation of the Republic—of the Republic as it was for centuries, in its renowned and glorious past: it is no mere marble record, no mirror, no phonograph of times gone by; it is not even a mere representation of great phantoms and great events; it is a true and genuine transubstantiation; it is veritably the body and blood of old Venezia. How can we weigh our words, when our admiration is thus boundless? How can we help feeling for the moment as if we were *cinqucentists*? Ah, what skill does this beauty all conceal! From the ponderous arcade, with its supports resting on the solid ground, worthy foundation of the grand structure it sustains, there rise the peerless arches of the storey above, emerging from the marvellous stone-work, and relieved by the perforations of its quatrefoils. Exalted and, as it were, enthroned above it is elaborate masonry pierced with noble Gothic windows, relieved by geometrical designs traced out in lines of red and white, running diagonally athwart the surface, and reaching up to the lacelike parapet surmounting the whole, through the apertures of which is revealed the azure of the skies. The central space of this extensive façade was felt to need some kind of break—something was wanting to give lightness to the solid fabric; and lo! it was



THE PIAZZETTA.

forthcoming: the beautiful lunette solved the problem, starting from just below the cornice of the loggia, and rising till, like a crown, it adorns the parapet itself. And note those three antique pillars at the corner! How wonderful is their workmanship! how exquisite and tender, yet how bold in the finish. They remind one of nothing so much as of the contour of a Grecian statue, representing the undraped figure of a maiden!

"From the short and massive pillars that compose the colonnade on the ground-floor springs the foliated work of the capitals, and over these again are groups of figures disposed irregularly, representing the Judgment of Solomon, Adam and Eve, Noah and his children. Then come the straight lines of the upper columns, with other capitals representing the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael, the Archangel Michael; whilst above rise three small columns, supporting the gable.

"There are times when the broad shadows of the sotto-portico and loggia give the walls the appearance of being made of silver filigree. How many are the speculations, of an historical and architectural kind, that force themselves upon our minds in connection with this imposing monument! Who would believe for example, that the façade facing the Molo is about a century older than that in front of the Piazzetta? Who would suppose that the capital called "del Matrimonio"—so named because the series of little figures above the foliage

represents the meeting of two lovers, the betrothal, the marriage, the bride-chamber, the birth of the first-born, and finally his death, thus depicting human life in the vicissitudes of its joys and sorrows—was produced between 1312 and 1328; whilst the capital at the corner, nearer the church, was carved by two worthy Florentines as late as 1438? Or, again, who would ever guess that the great central window—the Verone, as it is styled—bears the arms of Michele Steno, who was living in 1400, whilst the window on the other side shows those of Gritti, head of the State between the years 1525 and 1538?"

Such is Boito's account of the building in his "Travels," a volume not yet translated from the Italian.

The capitals of the columns, as well as the large windows of both façades, are, with unimportant exceptions, in complete harmony with each other. The pointed arches of the façades (as Boito has verified by documentary evidence) were in existence before the restoration, which, having been proposed by the Doge Mocenigo, was ordered to be carried out by the ratification of the great Council, on September 27th, 1422. This was not a complete re-building, but mainly a reconstruction of the wing facing the Piazzetta, which in many parts was much decayed.

Of Filippo Calendario, whose services to the noble building have not received anything like uniform recognition from all writers, Boito relates: "In the Marciana lies an anonymous chronicle of the fourteenth century, written in the Venetian dialect, in which occurs the entry: 'I will that ye should know what a fine stone-mason Felipo Chalendarivo was, and how that it was he who erected the new palace with the columns (cholonne) as ye see it now, and also how that he was much respected on account of his good understanding and expertness, which none other in Venice did possess in so high a degree.'" It was obviously because of the excellent advice Calendario gave the Signoria with respect to the construction of palaces, towers, &c., that he was regarded with such admiration and approval by the Government, for if we may rely upon other documents which appear more trustworthy, we are driven to the conclusion that he had little association with the Palace of the Doges except that, together with the rest of Marino Faliero's accomplices, he was hanged beneath its arcades.

Baseggio, the architect of the new palace, Giovanni Bartolommeo, Pantaleone Bon, Antonio Rizzo, and Pietro Lombardo were succeeded by Sansovino, that is to say, from the hands of the artists of the Middle Ages it passed to those of an artist of the Renaissance; but in spite of this, the two façades retained their marvellous uniformity.

Antonio Rizzo introduced style of his own into the structure. It was he who, of the 97,000 ducats that were granted him for the work of restoration, appropriated 10,000; and when the fraud was discovered, took refuge in flight. It was in 1484 that Rizzo began the wing containing the "Scala dei Giganti" (the staircase of the giants); and in the loggia which runs round the first storey he imitated the pointed arches of the pillars and the Gothic foliated work of the old loggia, but elsewhere he introduced designs of his own of great delicacy.



THE CORTILE
OF THE DOGES' PALACE.

About a century later, in 1615, Bartolommeo Manopola, a stone carver, whose name is comparatively little known in the annals of art, took down the walls which, with the above-mentioned arches and loggias, occupied three sides of the court, and replaced them with the admirable portico after Rizzo's previous designs.

It was then that the Renaissance style became amalgamated with the mediæval Gothic, and from the *Rinascimento* (the local name for the Renaissance) arose the style which, in its turn, led up to and was obliterated by the *baroque*.

We are involuntarily prompted to ask, is the art which thus captivates us in the Palace of the Doges of Arabic, Gothic, or of Roman origin? Of how many foreign elements is it composed, and how has it come to pass that it has absorbed them into itself or associated itself with them? Whence was the first inspiration of the work received? Have we to deal with something absolutely original and new, or have we not here the development, the completion of a style that at one time existed elsewhere, all unknown to us?

But we must now spare a little time to go up to that bewildering suite of apartments, in which the visitor soon loses his way, so dazzling and confusing in their number are the assembly-rooms, the council-chambers, the courts of justice, and the rooms of state.

It is to Boito, again, that we are indebted for our information about a little incident, probably related by no one else, that occurred in the Ducal Palazzo in our own day. We may well pause to repeat it whilst amidst scenes so full of mementoes of the old Republic.

B 11

The anecdote relates to Garibaldi. Giuseppe Garibaldi was neither a connoisseur nor a dilettante in artistic matters—heroes and men of action, perchance, have rarely leisure for such pursuits. Already a conqueror and a national hero, he found himself in Venice, and accompanied by a staff of officers he went to inspect the Palazzo Ducale. The dazzling and spacious apartments awakened little interest in him; impatiently he hurried through one after another. To him the gold, the marble and the decorations, upon which the expenditure had been so lavish, amounting to an appalling total and weakening no doubt the military resources of the state, gave annoyance rather than pleasure; in vain the cicerone, who conducted him, endeavoured to attract his attention to the incomparable treasures by which he was surrounded; the hero of Caprera kept hurrying forward in unconcealed indifference. But all at once he caught sight of a picture that made him stop. It was in the Sala del Scrutinio that he saw the famous "Battle of Lepanto." He fixed his eye upon the prominent figure in the painting, that of Sebastiano Veniero, who is represented with bare head and grizzly beard, standing at the prow of his ship, calm and motionless, undaunted by the terrors and tumult of the battle, and bidding defiance to the storm of Turkish arrows that was raging all round. In that resolute Admiral confronting the enemy Garibaldi recognised himself. Pointing towards the picture, he exclaimed to the officers in his suite, "Look, gentlemen; don't you see how exactly Veniero is like me?" and he repeated his words several times; "Yes; like me, exactly!" The officers were not likely to disagree with the suggestion; and, indeed, it is not to be disputed that there is a certain resemblance between Garibaldi and the hero of Lepanto. Garibaldi examined the picture a few moments longer, and then left the palace; there seemed nothing more he cared to see.

This authentic story is instructive in so far as it supplies another illustration of how men of extraordinary parts and eminence are often accessible only to one chain of ideas; yet with this distinction, that the man of eminence will generally be ready to confess his idiosyncrasy, whilst a mediocre person will not acknowledge it, but will profess an interest which he does not really feel.

Yet here are objects that can hardly fail to create a genuine interest, more or less intelligent. Few there are who would willingly overlook the fine chimney-piece in the Camera dei Scarlatti (once the sleeping-apartment of the Doges themselves); or who would like to pass on without a glance at the great geographical charts that cover the walls of the Sala dello Scudo; or without noticing the likeness of Marco Polo, the adventurous sea-captain, who was the first of his countrymen to explore the interior of Asia; or again without bestowing a passing look to the map of the world by Fra Mauro.

A few steps bring us to the Marciana, the library of San Marco, with its vast array of books and priceless collection of manuscripts. Here no one should fail to study the miniatures that embellish the Breviario Grimani and are always justly admired. The "Sala degli Armi" has doors made out of the cedars of Lebanon, the wood of which the Venetians only succeeded in procuring with much trouble, craft, and many threats, the trees being regarded as sacred, and protected accordingly. When the Patriarch of Mount Lebanon at length yielded to the importunities of the Ambassador of the Republic, he is reported to

have wept bitterly over the outrage he was permitting, and to have reproached himself for what he felt to be a crime. The Venetians would allow no obstacle to interfere with their demand, and they got their ten planks, each four fingers thick and ten feet long; enough too when it is remembered that at that date Mount Lebanon had only five-and-twenty cedars left. Apart, therefore, from the desecration, the loss might well excuse the good patriarch's grief. The agent of the Venetian Republic was a certain Batista Basadonna, who did not hesitate to tell a lie, and declared that the wood was wanted for a sanctuary. Ten "Veneziani" were to be given to the Church of Mount Lebanon, and nine to the Macademo, whereupon the trees were felled and sawn asunder. The hardest part of the business, however, had yet to be done, as it was imperative that the planks should be got away secretly, the risk being very great that their deportation would be resisted by violence. It was, therefore, under cover of night that seven mules were procured to bear away the precious freight, which was conveyed by out-of-the-way paths to Tripoli; whence, "by God's help," it was taken by sea to Venice—all to please a whim of the Illustrissimi forming the "Council of Ten."



MONUMENT TO DUKE URBINO
(The Cortile of the Ducal Palazzo).

Sanudo states in his chronicles that, although there was a gallows at the palace for the execution of thieves, thefts were of repeated occurrence; at one time, he says, it was a bench ("el banchal dil portego dil Palazzo") that was carried off, at another time the silver crown of a Madonna, and, at another, no less valuable a piece of property than the crimson satin covering of the seat of the Doge when he sat in council. The perpetrator of this last felony was fortunately caught, sentenced to death, and executed, being hanged between the pillars of the Piazzetta. Hanging

B B 2

in those days would appear to have been a very different proceeding from what modern appliances and advanced humanity have made it now. If the order of the "Council of Ten," in 1430, as given in its degenerate Latin, is to be taken literally, the operation was alike lingering and painful: "Debent sibi amputari manus dextera, et cum ipsa ligata ad colum ducatur in medium duarum columnarum ubi ad furcas que ibi fieri debeant suspendatur taliter, quod moriatur et stare debeat sic suspensus totam die lune proximam." And it is further said, and to some extent proved, that Venice was more merciful than other governments, although its condemned had to dangle for a quarter of a month between the columns, and to have their right hand cut off, as a warning to others.

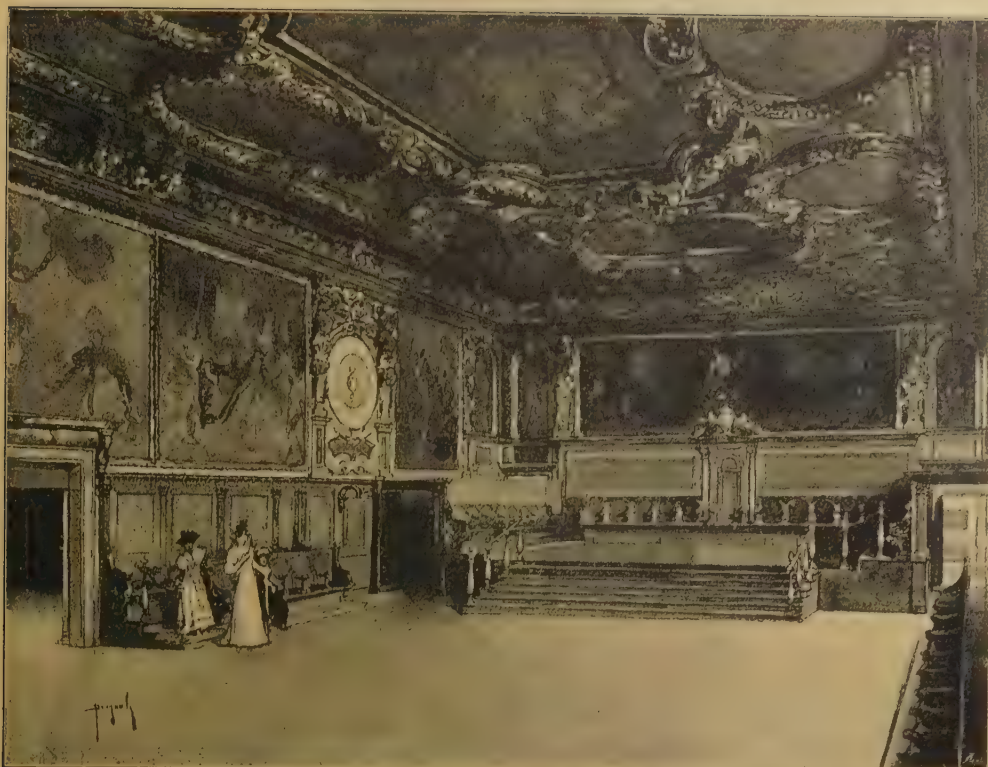
Another episode recorded by Sanudo, and given with considerable detail, is found under date July 13th, 1529. Writing about events that transpired in the previous century, he mentions that there was, at the doorway of the great council chamber, a step so high that it gave any one either old or infirm some trouble to get up. The good Ser Francesco Foscari was Doge at the time, and at his advanced age he experienced considerable difficulty in mounting this step. Without taking any trouble to inform the Signoria, he sent for a workman and had the step lowered. It was a terrible blunder the poor old man had made. The authority of the Doges was great, but it was not an authority that permitted them to make alteration of any kind in the Ducal Palazzo without the sanction of the Council. Fate had long spared him, but it overtook him at length in his eighty-fourth year. He was deposed, and one of the accusations against him was that he had altered the door-step: it was perhaps another nail in his coffin.

The "Sala del Senato" was also called the "Sala dei Pregadi," or "Hall of the Supplicated"; it was a name given to it at the period when the Senate had not any days fixed definitely for assembling, but when the councillors and other dignities were *pregadi*, *i.e.*, invited to meet together, because there was some matter that required consultation.

No visitor is likely to be unimpressed by another hall, which is known as the "Sala del Maggior Consiglio." What renders it remarkable is that it contains perhaps one of the largest pictures ever painted. This is Tintoretto's "Paradise," which is 70 feet long by 9 feet high—a gigantic work, produced in 1590, when the artist was just seventy-two years of age. There is also a good fresco by Guariento, a native of Padua, date 1365. It was unfortunately much injured by the fire that occurred in the palace in 1577, but there is a copper-plate engraving of it still in existence; it represents the Coronation of the Virgin as the Queen of Heaven, and when Dante, who was sent to Venice by the people of Ravenna, saw it, he wrote beneath it the lines:—

L'amor che mosse già l'eterno padre
Perfiglia haver de sua deità trina
Chostei, che fù del suo figlinol poi madre,
Del' universo qui, la fa regina.

We must not venture upon any poetic rendering of Dante's words, but their force may be seen in the following literal translation: "And now the Eternal Father,



THE HALL OF THE SENATE.

moved by love, has received into His triune deity, even as a daughter, her who became the Mother of His Son, crowning her Queen of the universe."

Should we not also say something about the "Piombi," those prisons beneath the leaden roof, and about the gloomy underground dungeons known as the "Pozzi"? Both have now lost very many of their horrible associations since they have been made freely accessible, and the inspection of them has served to dispel much misconception. It would appear more than probable that every mediæval castle had its own places of imprisonment corresponding with the Pozzi here, and it may have been a cause of thankfulness that they were so near the water; but barbarity was wide-spread in the Middle Ages, and it is difficult to realise what was the deadliness of the moral pest at that epoch.

Rather let us conclude our notice of the Palace of the Doges with an account of the entry of the Cavalier Filippo Mastachelio, upon his somewhat romantic errand. He was sent to the city of the winged lion to make choice of a bride for James of Lusignan, King of Cyprus. The proud Republic directed that seventy-two of the fairest daughters of the aristocracy should be summoned to the stately hall, and in obedience to the command the maidens all appeared adorned in bridal costume—a goodly gathering of youth and beauty, from which the ambassador was to take his choice. Colbertaldi Antonio of Asolo recounts the story, and describes the scene within the palace halls on the occasion. It was in the year 1468. Venice was at the zenith of her power. The patricians, the

procurators, the senators in their robes of office, the prelates in their gorgeous vestments crowded in and lined the walls; and then the maidens, seventy-two in all, daughters of the noblest in the land, hardly one amongst them having reached her twentieth year, entered and took their allotted place. The choice of the plenipotentiary fell upon Caterina Cornaro, a girl just fifteen, who had been brought straight from the seclusion of a nunnery to go through this ordeal in the dazzling pomp of the splendid hall. Every reason exists for believing that the selection was a foregone conclusion, and the subsequent voting of the assembly was but a formal ratification of what already had been settled. Caterina Cornaro, granddaughter on the mother's side of the Duke Archipelago and daughter of Marco Cornaro, was thus acknowledged as the adopted child of Venice and was apportioned a dowry of a thousand pounds of gold. As a result she remained for her life the mere tool of the Venetian state. Perhaps there were two occasions, supreme moments in her experience, which might in some degree indemnify her for the surrender of her free will. One of these would be the triumph she achieved in the competition of the maidens in the Palace of the Doges; the other, fifteen years later, the royal reception which Venice accorded her when she came back from Cyprus dethroned, and no longer a queen, except in name.



A THREATENING STORM.



SELLING FISH IN THE OPEN STREET.

The Every-day Charm of Venice.

"Hard is it to forego our will ;
If custom aid us, 'tis unconquered still."

The praises of Venice are for ever being sung ; alike in paintings and in word-pictures Venice is ever being extolled as one of the most fascinating survivals, in this unpoetical world, from times long gone by. As Schiller says, time has a sanctifying power, and whatever is grey with age is deemed divine. Our own generation realises yet more intensely the truth of this because whatever is grey with age is vanishing in civilized states, to make room for what is new and often irrepressible ; such is the power of the ever-rolling stream of Time on which we are borne along. It is seldom or never that we meet with a description of the familiar beauty of Venice which we think may not unsuitably be called her every-day charm. It is felt surely enough by those who take up a permanent residence in the fair city, and, perhaps, whether they are quite aware of it or not, it is the real motive of their being there at all. But the effect upon the mind of a stranger of this every-day life in a city in which land and water are so inextricably wedded together is an effect rarely expressed in words. The Venetian himself is scarcely conscious of the charm ; he takes it all for granted ; it belongs to him ; it is always with him from the cradle to the grave. It is only when we have been ill that we appreciate the blessing of health. Certain it is that no Venetian, from the highest to the lowest, would ever allow that any place could be superior to the city of his fathers, just because he himself is always well there. If he were to be asked why,



it is very likely that he would have nothing to say, or he might reply in all simplicity : " *Perchè vi si stà bene !*" (it is because we are all so well here). It is hard, and often impossible, to get Venetian women, especially of the lower orders, to consent to go elsewhere. Woman is born with an artistic instinct, and in a Venetian woman it is enhanced by her surroundings ; thus the daughters of Venice cling to their island city as they would to their dearest kindred, and languish, both physically and mentally, if they are torn away, even although they may go where their position and circumstances would seem to be improved, and the advantages greater than those they have enjoyed at home.

The tourist, when he begins to be sensible of this charm, ascribes it to the atmosphere of art by which he is surrounded, or perhaps to the soft air, or again to the absence of noise and bustle ; yet these are far from being the main factors in the charm.

Here he may find in plenty
many of the best things that life

can offer in the way of religion, poetry, music, love and beauty. Gracious gifts are these, the powerful influence of which will be felt, although it may be beyond his capability actually to define them.

Only let a man get accustomed to the peculiar features of life in Venice, and he will have learnt that it is easier to live there than elsewhere ; this is indeed an incontrovertible fact. No doubt it will be maintained that such a statement might be made with reference to all southern climates, inasmuch as "the south" and freedom from constraint are synonymous ; but in Venice there is something much more than this—she has a speciality of her own. It would seem as if the absence of dust was figurative, and that it signifies freedom here from the heavy dust of earthly cares with which we are continually choking. If a man is but half disposed to make the best of life, Venice in fine weather—and that is for nine months out of twelve—is the place for him.



VENETIAN WOMAN WITH HER CATS.

of the hammering of a blacksmith at his forge, the planing of a carpenter at his bench, or the short and crisp tap-tapping of the cobbler at his work; but these, indistinguishable from each other as they often are, and sometimes drowned by the splashing of a passing oar, are no disturbance whatever; they are rather an agreeable break upon the stillness, which would otherwise grow monotonous, and they serve to keep in touch with the outer world. Nor is it otherwise with the cries of the numerous hawkers in the street, which an accustomed ear will have learnt to distinguish one from another, while yet they are far away, and before the names of the special commodities to be sold can be actually heard.

After any prolonged residence in Venice, no one can remove into another town of

ordinary character without at once becoming aware how sensitive he has grown to the noise of traffic. The fact of the entire absence of vehicles of all kinds is not to be under-estimated in regard to that special point with which we are here concerned, namely, the composing influence of Venice upon the nervous system. It is an influence of which a passing tourist, hurrying on his way, is in a great degree incompetent to judge, because, so to speak, he leaves with his food still unassimilated, and the beneficial effect of Venetian repose may not be perceptible for months. The silence of a Venetian night must be most soothing and restful for a man whose nerves are overwrought.

The housekeeping, too, would appear to be free from the hurry and drive so generally associated with it elsewhere. The stone floor is little trouble to keep clean; whilst the windows and dark polished or painted doors require but the smallest amount of labour.

This is equally true with regard to the cooking. Rice, macaroni, polenta, fish or meat, either baked or roasted on a spit, comprise the ordinary articles of food. Italian cookery is often calumniated, but there is much about it that is extremely rational. Nor must fruit and vegetables be forgotten; they are always cheap here. With violets and primroses, the Venetian spring brings asparagus, strawberries, artichokes, green peas, and other delicacies. In every



A VENETIAN KITCHEN.

calle there is sure to be a dealer in fruit and vegetables, who has had his fresh stock brought in, and arranged it so temptingly and tastefully that it looks ready for an artist to copy.

And here, perhaps, it will not be deemed out of place to introduce a brief sketch of what is the Venetian *menu* to which we have referred. It may be said to have a stereotyped character, remaining unchanged, as it does, from year's end to year's end, and to all intents and purposes the same as it has been within the memory of all true Venetians.

Level up! Level down! Level all! This was the true tenour of the command of the Serenissima when he issued his order that "Every owner of a gondola, without distinction of rank or means, shall have such gondola covered with black cloth." It was the recognition of the principle of equality, and in various ways it still survives. In itself it might seem a matter of insignificance, but it has entailed the result that wealth in Venice is much less ostentatious and poverty much less terrible than they are elsewhere.

For example, whether you go, in the early winter time, to take your mid-day meal in the house of a nobleman, a banker, or a plain burgher, you will be sure to find at all that that is set before you alike. Steaming *Minestra di risi* (of rice in the soup there is always an abundance), and with it are several *Lughaneghe*, little sausages made of pork. Such is, during the winter, the ordinary first dish of the entire population. On Sundays, instead of the *Minestra di risi*, there will be *risotto*, a dish consisting of Parmesan, the flesh and liver of fowls, locally called *risotto alla Veneziana*. By rich and poor, young and old, ample justice will be done

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to the wholesome fare, and the appetites of all will give a relish to the meal. On Thursdays all Venice, as a rule, has *paste conse* for the first course, this dish being composed of macaroni or vermicelli, in one or other of the innumerable forms in which it is turned out by machinery, dressed with melted butter, Parmesan cheese, and good gravy. The main ingredients are the same in all cases; the difference is in the preparation, as a rich man will probably have truffles or Marsala in the sauce he pours over the *paste*, while the man of humble means would be satisfied with a dressing made from a slice of fat bacon. On Fridays every house reeks with the smell of bean-soup, or *alla Capucina*, and of fried fish; and here again the sole difference in the diet will not be in the material, but in the mode of preparing it for the table.

At Carnival-time every street child will daily manage to buy for himself five centesimi-worth of whipped cream, and there will not be a table in the town which is not loaded with a mountain of this delicacy, which is eaten with what is known as *storti*.

In the asparagus season, nobody is so poor as not to manage to get at least a little of this wholesome vegetable, served either boiled without salt or mixed with rice. Green peas, nearly always plentiful in the season, are boiled every day with rice by all classes. The perpetual changes that have to be introduced into the *menu* of the German, French or Slavonian people are quite unknown to an Italian; he cannot understand them. Begin to argue with him on the point, and he will say, "You eat bread every day: why not rice every day?" Neapolitans and Sicilians would ask, "Why do you not eat *paste* (macaroni) every day? Is it not made of meal?" The proverbial remonstrance against *perdrix, toujours perdrix*, has penetrated to the shores of Italy, and there is no doubt that it is sound good sense that encourages this moderation in diet.

Every month, as it comes round, brings in its own special contribution to the market in the way of fruit, vegetables, fish, and even of cheese, everything growing so fast that the season for it is soon over; but while that season lasts, abundance of fish, vegetables, or fruit are found on every table. For example, strawberries, peaches, or fresh figs, all eaten with bread, form for a time the supper of the lower classes, and are the daily dessert of those in the ranks above them.

Every kind of fish, or any product of the sea, must be partaken of at its own proper time, and at no other. Of course such things may be exhibited in the market-place in months when they are out of season, but at those times none but the ignorant will be found to buy them.

But we must not linger longer on this subject, though it might be prolonged without limit.

Perhaps no fact is much more significant of the democratic spirit that dominates the Venetians than the uniformity of their customs in every rank. Alike among the highest classes, especially where there are children, and in the very lowest, the polenta is served up without fail directly the hour of noon is struck, and everywhere twenty minutes earlier it is being stirred up in the saucepan, to be turned out in the tempting round yellow cakes, so light that they can be cut with a thread. The polenta is poured upon a wooden platter—china and earthenware being supposed to deteriorate its quality—and is



A VENETIAN MOTHER.

then covered with a napkin and brought to table with hot meat or fish; those whose means are limited being content to eat cheese with it, or perhaps fish of the smaller and cheaper kind. This is the Venetian "collazione," corresponding to a *déjeuner à la fourchette*, at which the food served for all ranks is similar, if not identical.

The "upper ten" (if by which term we mean the moneyed classes and the aristocracy) are rather disposed to let this meal occupy a very secondary and unimportant place. They are accustomed not to leave their sleeping apartments until nearly noon, and then they are satisfied with the lightest of refreshment. The object of this is that a good appetite may be reserved for the principal meal, which in the wealthier circles is always taken in the evening at seven o'clock.



A BARGE LADEN WITH VEGETABLES.

Red wine is universally drunk, and some of this is so cheap that it may be bought for 25 centesimi the litre.

When there has been a succession of good vintages in Italy a householder can procure excellent wine for his family at 60 centesimi per litre. A family drinking water only is rare in Venice. Beer at meal-times is taken only by Germans; and if a Venetian drinks beer at all, he will have it either before or after his meals.

Black coffee, which is the speciality, the veritable *arcanum* of Venice, is made fresh as often as it is required; it is prepared in a very few minutes in the primitive but very effective "cocoma," over a clear hearth-fire. Not only does black coffee appear as a sort of *sine quâ non* at every meal, but the true Venetian takes it freely between times, and it is offered as a matter of course to every

visitor. If the weather is hot, the Venetian drinks coffee because it counteracts the paralyzing effect of the sirocco ; if it is cold, he drinks coffee because it warms and invigorates him ; and if he is irritable, he drinks it with a few drops of lemon-juice to soothe him, for here the lemon plays very much the same part as it does in China, where it is credited with being an infallible remedy for every imaginable malady. If anyone is excited by joy, forthwith he resorts to his black coffee to calm his nerves, convinced that it acts as a sedative as much as it does as a stimulant. And what about the nerves ? how are they affected by it ? It would seem as if in Venice black coffee has not at all the same effect as it has elsewhere, for here people take just as much as they please and are none the worse.

There is another characteristic that should be mentioned which is not without its influence on the every-day life in Venice. There is nothing of the vanity of display in entertainments given in any grade in life. A glass of Marsala or Cyprus wine, a few biscuits, a cup of coffee, a couple of cigarettes—if these be provided, all the claims of hospitality will have been discharged. No one expects anything more, either of a morning or of an evening.

Amongst the recreations of Venetian life must be reckoned the gondola and steamboat trips on the canal, the sea bath, at once so comfortable and so cheap, the free concerts in the Piazza di San Marco, whilst every walk a Venetian takes affords effects of light and shade such as he could not see elsewhere without climbing up the highest of mountains. However, anyone who knows Venice is aware how peaceful and enjoyable hours may be spent, either in the cafés that abound by the waterside, or on some picturesque campo, where at every turn some fresh subject worthy of an artist's pencil is to be seen. Or, again, he may, in summer time at least, get away from the bustle of San Marco, and find some rural vine-clad harbour, where, with charming scenery around, he may gossip with his acquaintances, join in a game of skittles, or indulge in a glass of wine. On the other hand, if his preference is for a scene of bustle and activity, he may, especially in the morning, see plenty of life at the fish-market ; or he may watch the diverting incidents on the Rialto, where the barges are arriving from the islands laden with heaped-up cargoes of fresh fruit and vegetables. The Strada Nuova,



GIRL ATTENDING TO HER FLOWERS.

the Mercerie, the Riva del Carbon, the Ruga di Rialto, as far as S. Silvestro, and even beyond, will all provide abundant opportunities for studying street life in Venice to the best advantage.

Yet one more felicitous circumstance must be named to which Venizi is indebted for her unchanging charm. She cannot be modernised. Large as is the city, crowded to excess with buildings, the population is comparatively small, computed at present to be not more than 131,691 souls. No doubt this adds to her attractiveness, but nevertheless, thanks to the continuous influx of strangers from every quarter of the world, she cannot sink to the level of an ordinary town. A witty Frenchman once spoke of Venice as the thoroughfare of Europe, and since his days America has swelled the crowds flocking to the beautiful city, in whose streets the constant ebb and flow of traffic reflects that on the lagoons encircling her.



THE GAME OF "BOSSOLO BOSSOLO CANARIN."



THE SO-CALLED SERENADE OF THE GALEGGIANTE.

The Galeggiante.

"What light is this that glows so brightly
through the gloom of night?"

It is the height of summer and the eve of a festival. Either it is a statute-fair, or the birthday of the loved Queen Margarita, or some one or other of those welcome festivals of which the Venetians have so many, and of which they are so fond.

The Piazza di San Marco is lighted "a giorno," bright as day with dazzling illuminations. There could be no better opportunity to study the diverse types of female beauty passing to and fro, in the most airy and captivating of toilettes.

But it is not Venice alone that contributes to this lovely gallery of living pictures. All the surrounding mainland, all Upper Italy, by which may especially be understood the plains of Lombardy, at such times send forth their noblest flowers of womanhood to the health-giving strand of the Adriatic. Perfectly distinct types are they, some from Milan, others from Ferrara, Bologna, Vicenza, and Padua. It is, however, the Venetian girl who captivates us most, for she looks pale and almost weary; there is something about her of languor, love-sickness or of longing, giving to her face an expression of tenderness that sets her apart from the prouder types from the mainland, who, though most of them have more marked and more classical features, are for that very reason less taking.

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In such a gathering time flies quickly ; it is impossible for the pleasure-seeker to see all he would like, and as it is useless to long for the unattainable, he tears himself away. He may be on the brink of experiencing something of the *grande passion*, as the French call love, and so he smiles upon the maidens dark and fair, who have seen scarce a score of years, while they look back with a searching glance reminding one of the piercing eyes of the parrots imported from the tropics.

It is strange that, see the Piazza di San Marco when we will, it seems to be ever fraught with something that is suggestive of lovers or of love. For us, however, thoughts of love are out of place ; we must refrain from anything of the kind, especially when on a journey, for love always puts an end to leisure. Anyone in love is quite incapable of forming a reasonable judgment upon the things of the outer world ; he may see them in the aggregate, but he has no power to comprehend their details. Yet love-glances are not love, and because they are transient and not serious, superficial and not deep, they may be exchanged without detriment to the gaieties of the festal night on the Piazza di San Marco.

A silvery laughter breaks upon the ear, and the eye involuntarily turns to see whence the merry sound has come ; it rests upon a group of sprightly girls, the Forestieri di Aqua, who bring with them an exuberance of the liveliness and gaiety which seem to flourish more upon the mainland than they do on the more melancholy shores of the lagoon. The Italian as a rule is immensely fond of laughter, and he likes to take *riso* in a double meaning. The saying runs : "Riso fa buon sangue," and *riso* meaning laughter as well as rice, he makes a joke to the effect that a good fit of laughing, like a good meal of rice, will make good blood.

A festival-night at San Marco means twenty thousand or thirty thousand, or even more, crowded in a space small for such numbers ; it implies one large orchestra, and very often two ; it means the illumination of the whole Piazza by candles in the windows on every side, while from the three great flagstaffs, rising from their colossal pedestals of bronze, float the waving banners. Those ancient ensigns of victory, which were erected on the Piazza when the islands of Candia, Cyprus and the Morea were conquered by the Republic, in 1505, under the Doge Leonardo Loredan, were executed by Leopardi ; the remarkable delicacy of the ornamentation on them is greatly admired.

It is a summer night like so many here, when there is not a breath of air, we must not say to stir a leaf, because there are no trees growing near, but not enough to move a ribbon on a maiden's neck—a night on which the sky is like a sheet of bronze, all studded over as a giant's armour might be with precious stones—a night on which the marble pavement is lighted up so brilliantly by the electric glow that a pin that happened to be dropped might easily be found.

The groups of gaily dressed women, on the countless chairs, suggest no more apt comparison than that they resemble the blossoms of a sweet bouquet. And what a medley of sounds ! Music, laughter, gossip, jesting, quizzing are perpetually going on, with perhaps a little slander. There are fiery eyes that wound, and the wounded victims who seem to plead for a glance of compassion. Meanwhile, the crowds are ebbing and flowing, passing and repassing, and everything is unconventional and unconstrained. It might be imagined that a Court was being held here, resembling the stately Courts of the Middle

Agas, those gay assemblies where the painter exhibited his latest picture, the singer sang his choicest melodies, and the poet recited the verses which were inspired by the munificence of some noble patron.

We have already tried to describe the appearance of the façade of San Marco, but our description did not refer to its aspect under such conditions as these; the scene is now different. A blazing sheet of Bengal fire is illuminating everything, and the glow bathes the fine mosaics, in their arched recesses, with a flood of purple light. The scene altogether baffles description; it were a misnomer to speak of it as "fairy-like"; "dream-like," perhaps, would be the more appropriate term, as only in the world of dreams could a vision of such transcendent beauty be unfolded.

But what fresh sound is that? It is only the fluttering of the pigeons; alarmed at the commotion, they fly aloft, and hover nervously above the heads of the thousands upon thousands who have thronged into the square, attracted by the spectacle of the "fantastic illumination" which is promised in the programme of the *fête*.

The old Campanile, with its fine green marbles, looks down as might some hoary ancestor surveying the multitudes below. Inside it is illuminated with Bengal lights, so that its apertures glow like the openings of blast-furnaces at a foundry, or like the craters bursting with flame above the lava-covered sides of Mount Vesuvius.

Ah! there are the poor pigeons again! How thoroughly they are defrauded of their night's repose! Will they ever become used to the nocturnal revelries of Venice? How excited they are! But when does the experience of the old ever make the young any wiser? These young pigeons are not likely to be an exception to the rule, but must be left to flutter and find a refuge where they can during the commotion causing them such groundless confusion and alarm.

Looking at the grand old campanile, we are led to give another glance at the *Loggia* lying at its foot. This costly vestibule has been pronounced the finest jewel of Venetian architecture. Pietro Aretino (perhaps the keenest and most dreaded wit of his day) said of it that "it was above envy." To be seen properly it requires the clear light of day, meriting as it does the calm and deliberate study due to a work executed in all its details in such strict accordance with the laws of beauty. There is a story told of the ingratitude with which Sansovino, the designer, was treated by his contemporaries, but we must not stop to relate it here; it is a narrative that does not harmonise at all with the exhilarated mood resulting from the exciting scene on the Piazza on this summer night. We use the word "summer" advisedly, as only then is Venezia in her fullest beauty.

And where shall we now take up our position? Where best can we survey the scene? Let it be from close to the fine old Campanile. How vividly does the intense light bring out the outline of the golden angel surmounting its pinnacle! In the old days, when all manner of wondrous tales were circulated about "Chim Boraçoa," the Campanile was nick-named the Chim Boraçoa of Venice, and if the old giant had a tongue, no doubt his long experience would qualify him to tell some startling histories.

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The ascent of the Campanile is by a winding inclined plane, so gradual that it might be accomplished on horseback. It was done in bravado by Napoleon I., and no one, even on the shortest visit to Venice, ought to omit mounting it, and so attaining the height of 240 feet from the ground, which will enable him to get a fine view of the surrounding scene. It will be owned that Venice presents a spectacle as wide as it is unique from this elevated standpoint. She may indeed be described as floating amongst the islands round about. The bay of the Adriatic, with its outlook towards the open sea, the patches of land, green or brown or blue, breaking the mirror-like surface of the lagoons, the purple summits of the Vicentine hills, all conspire to render the view from the gallery of the Campanile one of the most enchanting imaginable.

We may take occasion, while standing here, to relate the substance of a sad story selected from many others, and marked also with some elements of the grotesque. As late as the fifteenth century the barbarous custom was maintained in Venice that priests, when convicted of certain crimes, should be shut up in an iron cage, and that the cage should be attached to the gallery of the Campanile and left suspended in the air. The cage was locally known as a "Cheba," a name derived from the Italian "Gabbia," which literally meant a cage. Bread and water, the only diet the severity of those times allowed prisoners, was supplied in a basket which the warders of the tower periodically let down, but so meagre was the allowance that the captive behind the iron bars was soon in danger of starvation. No doubt this inhuman treatment was designed to bring about a slow and dreadful death, and in the majority of cases this result was sure to follow.

Now, the story runs that there was a certain priest who was sentenced to the "Cheba," and his name, it is said, as confirming the account, has actually been preserved as Jacopo Tanto. To the amazement of the prison warders, Jacopo Tanto, instead of withering away under the miserable pittance of bread and water with which his torturers supplied him, continued to live on and on, and to thrive wonderfully. The bewildered citizens were rapidly coming to the conclusion that a miracle was being worked, when a plain matter-of-fact solution of the mystery was at length discovered. The step-mother of the imprisoned priest was a woman of considerable means, and had a deep compassion for the fate that had befallen him. She had succeeded in bribing one of the keepers, and he, in addition to the wretched prison diet, regularly filled the basket with the most nourishing and tempting food, which was brought him by the woman, and conveyed it, under cover of the night, to the occupant of the cage. It was by no miracle that Jacopo Tanto's life had been prolonged, and his health so thoroughly maintained.

Circumstantial details of this story, written in the Latin of the time by a monk who was a contemporary of Jacopo Tanto, are found in a record in the "Archivio Veneto." For the benefit of those who are interested in such curiosities, we may append an extract from the original text which professes to describe the delicacies and sustaining food which were carried up to the condemned prisoner: "Fugacias fabricata, et pinsatas, cum nucibus, mandulis et zucari pulvere ac fritolas; et alias confectiones, quibus produxit vitam in longum, contro



INTERIOR OF SAN MARCO.

sententiam." It may be mentioned that these "fugacias" or "focaccie" still hold their place as a favourite cake of the Venetians, and that the "fritole" are still much appreciated, and are never wanting from the *menu* at all times of popular festivity. Certainly the articles of food chosen by the considerate step-mother were not unsuited to the need.

The unfaithfulness of the prison warder to his office having been discovered, things went hardly with him; he was sentenced to pass a whole year in the Pozzi (the underground prison in the Palace of the Doges which strangers are now allowed to inspect by torchlight), and at the end of the year he was condemned to exile for life.

After the fifteenth century this revolting penalty of exposure in the cage ceased to be inflicted; it was expunged from the statute-book, and from that time forward the old Campanile witnessed no more such barbarities.

With few exceptions, women had no prominent part in the public affairs of the Venetian Republic in the fourteenth century, which perhaps may illustrate the soundness and the strength of that Republic; but for all that women enjoyed certain privileges of their own, and were ensured a protection, the chief aim of which was to "keep women in their proper place." Some examples may illustrate this remark.

The Venetian woman, who, in her own domestic sphere, occupied the same honoured position as the Roman matron, was allowed to alleviate, as far as lay within her power, the melancholy lot of condemned criminals—of course under limitation and proper supervision; but to her were opened alike the Pozzi in their gloomy depths, and the Piombi, in their stifling heat, just beneath the scorching leads. About these cells and dungeons much has been told which recent investigations and the calm scrutiny of truth have relegated to the sphere of fable; and

there is no solid ground for supposing that the prisons of Venice were materially different from those of other quarters at a time when the light of compassion did not illumine the generality of mankind. It was then the sweet prerogative of the Venetian woman to ameliorate the want, the misery, the sickness, the distress of every kind that were sure to be found in all the places of imprisonment; and there is no room to question that the women of every class, high and low, took advantage of the concession the Senate had granted them. It was one of the most congenial occupations of their life to do something to soften the lot of the miserable and unfortunate, and they made a point of carrying them food and drink on all occasions of public festivity; moreover, during the winter they went about from house to house making collections on their behalf—condescending to become humble supplicants in order to be able to persevere in their self-imposed tasks of benevolence.

The stately figures of the Venetian ladies, in their costly apparel, as immortalised by the brush of some old master, awaken in our mind a loftier sense of sympathy when we associate them with their deeds of mercy and compassion. We realise how worthily they have earned for themselves the name of noble women. Many unquestionably authentic documents survive, which demonstrate the liberality with which charitable bequests were made by wealthy women of patrician rank. The Venetian archives include many examples of such legacies for the benefit of the destitute and the imprisoned, and some of them are still paid even in the present day.

To their wives, limited as for the most part they were to the quiet routine of their own homes, the keen-sighted householders of Venice were willing enough to allot this sphere of merciful activity, assured that it would be an occupation congenial to their loftiest aspirations. As for protection, that was pledged by the Serenissima to every individual of the feminine sex, of whatever rank, who lived beneath the banner of the winged lion. In the eyes of the law a woman, as such, was a "vas sacrum"—a consecrated vessel, which no one could presume to desecrate with impunity. And this protection was impartial; it extended even to the slave-girls, mostly negresses who had been brought over from far-off shores by returning conquerors, who had secured them either as servants for their wives or as waiting-maids and play-fellows for their daughters. Amongst the entries in some of the documents of the Archives, there occurs one which relates how a young scion of the exalted ducal house of the Faliero, for doing violence to a slave-girl—her name is given as Saray, and she was probably a Mahomedan—was sentenced for his crime, without any regard to his rank, to be imprisoned for a year in the Pozzi, and to pay a fine of 300 sequins. There was a still further measure of protection afforded to Venetian women in the Middle Ages, and there were other special privileges assigned them as fulfilling the responsibility of wife or mother, but of these we may speak at another time.

But now we begin to think that for our lovely summer evening we have been having enough of the old folios, and may leave them undisturbed where they are, covered with dust and yellow with age. Off again let us be into the heart of the gaiety that is so bright. The present knows nothing of pozzi or of piombi, and we may forget that memory has been recalling them to our minds. Here in the



THE FONT IN SAN MARCO.

bustle and animation of the Piazza di San Marco we may be oblivious of them altogether.

Look how the thronging crowd sways to and fro; shoulder to shoulder it moves backward and forward, and the movement seems to add to the general pleasure. The joy of the young and hopeful is infectious, and seems to communicate something of its delight to the old, the feeble, and the weary. But time goes on; it is near midnight, and as the clock is about to strike, it is evident that the crowd in the Piazza is thinning, and that there is a simultaneous movement towards the Piazzetta. What is to be seen there?

We allow ourselves to be carried along by the human stream, and the scene that awaits us is unique of its kind, and most difficult to describe. The canal is crowded with gondolas; Bengal lights are bursting forth, here and there and everywhere; the illuminations gleam brightly above the gondolas, above the mass of heads and the figures of the gondoliers, who stand out from the dark background of their craft, and look weird and ghostlike in the changing colours of the fireworks, now green as jealousy, now blue as a sapphire, or now red as if fresh from the furnaces of the infernal regions. Truly it is a bewildering and fantastic scene, and might almost be called a pandemonium.

And now what next? As in some fairy tale, out on the pitch-black surface of the water rises up the hand of the great presiding genie, the good spirit, taking the form of the "Galeggiante," which means literally "the floating one." With equal justice might it be described as "the illuminator." Like the swan in "Lohengrin," it sails leisurely along; and what a dazzling object it is! It is a temple of mirth, of music, and of singing—a crystal structure, whence the strains of a full-toned orchestra are heard, and of which the echoes are ever and again repeated, harmonizing marvellously with the ecstatic shouts and thundering applause from thousands and thousands of human voices.

These gatherings are known as "serenatas." According to traditional custom, they are organised by the Municipality five or six times during every summer. The orchestra that is provided will, as a rule, number from sixty to a hundred skilled musicians, all distinguished by the complimentary name of "Professori" in the programmes that announce the *fête*, and at present they are under the conductorship of the popular song-writer, Pier-Adolfo Tirindelli, the director of the Venice Conservatorium. Usually some half-dozen trained opera-singers are engaged to undertake the solos and duettos in the performance.

The "Galeggiante" is a "podium," or a kind of parapetted platform as large as a good-sized barge, and is towed along by a steam tug. The structure upon it assumes some fresh form every year, being in one season a cupola or a pagoda, in another a huge bower smothered with the gayest of flowers, or again a gigantic shell sparkling with jewellery, or an expanded Chinese umbrella, studded with pearls and supported by pillars decked out with colours so that the whole represents an enormous nosegay. Perhaps the most effective of these diverse devices is that of the cupola, as admitting of the best arrangement of the coloured glass globes, some opal, silver, or amber, and others green, which are displayed upon it by hundreds. It is incredible to what perfection the art of this kind of decoration has been carried. To meet with the like of the Galeggiante it would be necessary to take a voyage to the Celestial Empire, for nowhere else but on the yellow waters of China would it be possible to see so elaborate and gorgeous a structure. Every accessory, too, contributes to the effectiveness of the scene: the crowds upon the water, the advancing procession, the masses of the people on the bridges, on the *fondamenti*, and at the windows of every house and every palace commanding a view; the roar of the voices of the multitude, and the sudden check on the volubility of the crowd when silence is ordered for some favourite song—all conspire to render the spectacle as impressive as it is unique.

Only invalids and those who wait upon them would remain within doors at such a time. Every one with the proper use of his limbs will be astir—nay, the very infant in its mother's or its nurse's arms will stare with all its eyes at the scene of wonderment. For a Venetian to stay at home on such a summer night would be to go against his most natural instincts; to remain indoors would be a sheer impossibility.

There is but one festival, the "Festa del Redentore," or that of the Redeemer, which in any way outrivals the Galeggiante in the favour of the populace.



A VENETIAN FÊTE KNOWN AS EL BACCHANAL DEL REDENTOR.

Shall we never come to an end of our chapter on the Piazza di San Marco? Shall we ever complete our description of the Cathedral with its mosaics, the Palace with its sculptures, the Pillars with their effigies of S. Theodore and S. Mark? Such a description is beyond us altogether. To give any adequate delineation of these wonderful monuments would require first an architect not only with knowledge of his art, but also with the power of the pen; he must not only be keen to see, but he must be able to describe. And then would not a classical shrine be wanted to contain the library which should set forth fully the richness of the Campo Marco, its Museum, its Piazza, its Piazzetta?

Gregorovius, we are told, spent forty years in compiling his history of Rome, eager that what he had learnt by his industry and intelligence should be handed down to posterity. There lives in Venice the Commendatore Ferdinando Ongania, who has published, in fourteen folio volumes with eleven hundred full-page plates, a work which he has entitled the "Basilica d'Oro." The accomplished author has devoted twenty years of his life and a considerable portion of his means to his project of exhibiting to the world, both by pen and pencil, the inestimable treasures which the Church of San Marco possesses. He has achieved a work that far surpasses all previous books of the kind in exhaustiveness and artistic finish. So well recognised is the value of this patient and laborious compilation, that museums, academies, and universities in many parts of Europe have made a point of securing it as an indispensable addition to their libraries. Nor have the United States of America been behindhand in this respect. Various sovereigns and many statesmen, when the publication has been submitted to them, have determined to procure a copy for themselves, discerning what a splendid and complete account it comprises

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of the unique and multiform features of this noble monument of architecture. Numerous private individuals have become possessors of the work by purchasing it in serial parts; and as time has gone on, the enterprising publisher has devised a plan by which the volumes may find their way to a wider circle: he has suggested a method by which purchasers of moderate means may pay by convenient instalments, and so gradually secure the whole. The "Basilica d'Oro" merits all the appreciation it has received as a comprehensive and intelligent description of the glories of San Marco. The illustrations, given in appropriate colours, are all that could be desired.

And as for the shrine which our fancy has suggested, Ongania has made provision for that too; he has designed a piece of furniture, alike elegant and classic, and not occupying too much space, corresponding in style with the handsome antique binding of the book itself. In such a receptacle the fortunate owner of "The Golden Church" may well be content to deposit his precious acquisition.





MONUMENT TO GOLDONI ON THE PIAZZA SAN BARTOLOMEO.

Walks in Venice.

III.

"Now that our weary feet do crave for rest,
To use our fancy's wings is meet and best."

When we have well taken in the significance of the neighbourhood of the Rialto, and are still conscious of the exhilaration which such an animated scene produces, we may turn our steps, without recrossing the Piazza San Bartolomeo, along the Riva del Carbon to San Lucca, which is one of the most central, and may be reckoned one of the most lively, of all the quarters of the older Venice. The Riva del Carbon (with which we have already made acquaintance) runs alongside the Grand Canal, and is a favourable point of observation for a good view of one side of the Rialto Bridge, and of the Canal above and below

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it. If we turn into the cool fissure-like Calle delle Scimie (the Street of the Monkeys), we shall find ourselves, at the farther end of it, in a piazza of small extent, but crowded with fine buildings, including the Church of San Salvatore, the Scuola attached to it, besides the café which is a prominent feature of the whole. A good deal of traffic goes on in the direction of the Ponte del Lovo, due, perhaps, in some measure to the Teatro Goldoni being at the corner. Then begins the Calle del Fabbro, a long, narrow, business street in which all the houses are so high that even in summer time it is so shady as to be almost gloomy; it runs in a straight line almost as far as the back of the Procuratie Vecchie. It is peopled almost exclusively by small dealers, amongst the most thriving of which are the "Friggipesce" (the fryers of fish), and it is very interesting to watch them take the great varieties of fish, not to name other products of the sea, out of pans of

boiling oil, and deliver them to their customers, smoking hot and reeking, wrapped in paper. In spite of the narrowness of the passage, the majority of the purchasers will stand and eat their fish just where they have bought it, or they will lounge against the trellis of the unglazed window of the shop, which as often as not is dressed with rosemary. In the height of the summer the smell of the boiling oil is offensive enough to make the passenger hurry past the stalls that supply these out-door meals.

To reach San Lucca we need not go quite so far, but should turn off somewhat sooner to the right into the Calle San Lucca, which is another of the narrow avenues given up to small traders. It leads to the piazza of the same name, whence numerous unnecessary windings lead us to the Riva del Carbon. The pleasant little square contains a chemist's and a confectioner's shop, both of which unquestionably are of great antiquity, and lay a certain claim to historical associations. In the days of the confectioner's progenitor, the "illustrissimi," or the noblest of the land, were accustomed to betake themselves to the shop and refresh themselves with Spanish bread, *focaccine*, *baicoli*, or other Venetian sweetmeats. The chemist's shop is said to have played



DIFFICULTIES OF TRAFFIC ON A WET DAY.



SELLERS OF FRIED FISH.

a part in the life of George Sand, who, during her long residence in Venice and in the Cadore Alps, used to have letters addressed to her here, and was on very friendly terms with the proprietor, who was able from time to time to render the distinguished foreigner some seasonable services.

Hence the road leads direct through the Calle dei Faseri to the Frezzeria, one of the most frequented thoroughfares of the city, being the chief quarter for the sale of household provisions, as the Mercerie is for other wares. It is a long, straight, asphalted passage, beginning just behind l'Ascensione, running westward, and terminating at the Campo San Fantino. Even on rainy days, when Venice elsewhere looks dull and dejected, the Frezzeria will be found animated and bright. The provisions, intermixed with flowers, will be, as usual, set out in tempting array; the buyers will flock in and crowd the narrow space to make their bargains, and the whole aspect of the scene will be spirited and cheerful. In the summer time the tall houses shut out the sunshine and provide a welcome shade; but they also make a shelter when the weather is windy and cold, and hence the Frezzeria rarely fails to be well frequented. The Campo San Fantino contains the Fenice Theatre, the Athenæum, and the Church of San Fantino, and is nearly always lively, a peculiarity enhanced by a *café chantant* that (in the summer time at least) extends its accommodation far into the piazza. Adjoining this café is the Campiello Gaétano, in which is an example of a small house with one of the picturesque outside staircases which never fail to attract the attention of artists. Next to the Fenice Theatre is the Conservatorium of Music, which well deserves the high reputation it has acquired. It is popularly known, as the *Liceo Marcello*, being named after its founder. The Fenice Theatre was opened in 1791 with the



CARNIVAL TIME ON THE RIVA.

opera of *I Giuochi di Agrigento* ("The Games at Agrigentum"), the production of Maëstro Paisiello. The present Athenæum, or Literary Institute, was formerly the Scuola of San Girolamo, the abode of a religious fraternity, whose function it was, with their faces masked, to attend convicted criminals on their way to execution, and then to escort their dead bodies with dirges to the place of burial.

From San Fantino a path leads by the Campiello delle Palle, through yet more crooked little streets, and along a sotto-portico to the principal entrance of the Fenice, where on nights when there is a performance a pretty sight is not infrequently to be seen. A continuous succession of covered gondolas is arriving at the peristyle of the opera-house; the gay liveries of the gondoliers display their varied colours in the flickering light, and the ladies trip out upon the steps, arrayed in the lightest and most fascinating of attire.

After passing through the Calle Caorta, we come out upon the Piazza Sant' Angelo, which contains several imposing palaces celebrated in the past. The same path will also take us to the old cloister of San Stefano, the main entrance to which is ornamented with a high-relief in marbles of various colours. The subject of the relief is St. Augustine praying on behalf of the brethren of his order. The cortile of the old monastery is now a public thoroughfare; it has an Ionic colonnade. On the walls of the cloister may be noticed the much-faded remains of frescoes, which are attributed to Pordenone, whose real name was Giannantonio Licinio, Pordenone being simply his native place, from which, like many other artists, he assumed or was assigned the name by which he is known in the art world. Leaving the cool and shaded court, we come out at once on to the Campo San Stefano, otherwise known as the Campo Francesco Morosini, where stands a church with a handsome Gothic



THE CAMPIELLO SAN GAÉTANO
(Near the Fenice).

portal. Beyond the church are the Morosini, the Barboro, the Loredan, and (of more special note) the Pisani Palazzi. Going on in the direction of the Iron Bridge, we shall pass the Church of San Vitale, a building of the style of the Decadence, and, further on, the back of the Palazzo Cavalli, or Franchetti. From this fine Piazza we should proceed by the way leading to San Samuele, situated in one of the oldest parts of the city, and worthy of our careful inspection. Several buildings of consummate beauty, and not a few of high historical interest, are to be found concealed, as it were, in the neighbouring by-ways.

We could not undertake to specify all the out-of-the-way nooks and passages containing objects worthy of a traveller's attention, and which constitute one of the



striking features which give a walk through Venice an especial charm, but we do feel under the most bounded obligation to advise him by no means to overlook those quarters of the "City of the Lagoons" which, as a rule, are not thought of by strangers, and are consequently little frequented by them.

To give two or three examples, in the dark, busy Calle del Fabbro let us take the first narrow opening on the right hand, and we shall find ourselves suddenly close to a "corte," a place shadowed by a bower of growing vines, and provided with a stone bench, upon which groups may be seen every evening, enjoying a friendly gossip. Irreproachable in its cleanliness and neatness, the spot is worthy to be called a sort of oasis in the desert.

Or, again, in the narrow Calle dei Fuseri, which has been noticed as running into that favourite centre, the Frezzeria, after passing the Hôtel Victoria where Goethe stayed, we will venture into the Sotto-portico Malvasia. This name Malvasia has its own significance. Adopted as a proper name in Venice, it may be accepted as a proof that malmsey, that costly product of Magna-Græcia (including Apulia), was once a favourite wine here. Let us go on, and we shall see the Calle dell' Antico Forno. A little further and nearly opposite, and we have discovered the Corte della Regina d'Ungheria, a sort of miniature world in itself, airy and sunny, which has contrived to hide itself behind the narrow street, and in a corner so dark and dirty as to be little short of revolting. We shall find the same kind of thing if, when we are in the Calle del Pestrin (which is rather a broad and important street opposite the cloister of San Stefano), instead of crossing the Campo, we keep straight on, but on the other side. Most unexpectedly we shall come upon the Corte dell' Albergo, a nice-looking square, through which, on the land side, we may proceed till we reach several charming palazzi and palazzini. Thence we may go into the Calle degli Advocati, a long, solemn-looking street, without shops of any kind, which is especially patronised as a residence by the gentlemen of the law. This Calle branches off towards San Benedetto, where, besides the church and its accessory buildings, is the Palazzo Orfei, which is interesting, if for nothing else, for its ancient, though unimposing cortile.

Continuing our way beneath the shade of tall houses and through several streets of the same character, without entering the Calle della Mandola, which is a sort of main thoroughfare, we reach the little Church of San Lucca, and pretty close to it the characteristic back entrance, or we ought rather to say the water entrance, of the Rossini Theatre. The Church of San Lucca (which it may



THE MONUMENT TO MANIN.



A WOMAN OF FRIULI.

be remarked contains the remains of the much-calumniated Pietro Aretino) stands in a delightfully quiet spot.

Beyond San Benedetto we reach what was originally the Campo San Paternian, but is now the Piazza Daniele Manin. We cannot do otherwise than pause and look well at the noble statue before us. What power, what energy has the sculptor thrown into that wonderful head! We must add a few words about the sculptor, Luigi Borro, a contemporary of Manin, who came to so sad and premature an end. His works must ever be greatly admired. Since Canova, Venice had produced no artist of equal genius. Other evidences of the master-skill of his chisel are to be seen in a lion that adorns the Scala dei Giganti in the Palace of the Doges, and in a bas-relief in the same palace, which at the time of its production gained him the "Prix de Rome." Unfortunately, his later years, which under other circumstances might have been happy and propitious, were marred by a mania that seized him for collecting pictures. The *furore*

that drove him to secure the paintings of old masters so mastered him that his own art was entirely neglected. He was a stately and handsome man in appearance; his long grey locks waved on a head that might have been a model for a Jupiter. When he died, Venice lost not only an eminent artist, but one of her most original individualities. At the time of his premature death, he left behind him some fifteen hundred old pictures of various values, but he closed his days in destitution, because nothing could induce him to dispose of even one of the treasures which he had acquired at the cost of so much self-denial.

From the Piazza Manin, the calle exactly opposite the statue is the nearest way to the famous spiral staircase, the "Scala Minelli." This curious and artistic structure, which is now shut in by a grating to protect it from further injury, belongs to the fifteenth century, and is probably the production of one of the Lombardi. There is no ground for the hypothesis of some art critics outside Venice, that it dates back to the twelfth century. The palace to which the scala is attached belonged in bygone days to the long-extinct family of the Minelli, and is well worth seeing, if only as a fine example of architecture. The marble staircase is seven storeys in height, and reminds us at once of the



THE SCALA MINELLI.

leaning tower of Pisa, on the constructed; but here the galleries more openings, these openings character, which con-



charm. If it were accessible position, such a dark and dingy corner as the Calle Contarini del Bovolo, it would have a far wider reputation. The name Bovolo, it may be remarked, is the Venetian for any shell-fish resembling snails. These "daylight" towers, as they have been called—a name very appropriate to them—are now extremely rare. A similar structure, which would rank next to it in beauty, although it is infinitely inferior, is that on the Campiello San Gaétano, behind the Fenice Theatre.



model of which it is manifestly of the spiral are pierced with many giving it a light and airy siderably enhances its situated in an easily instead of being in



Having retraced our steps a short distance from the Scala Minelli to San Fantin, let us return by the Calle del Caffetier to the Via Ventidue Marzo, a street with little of the Venetian character, it being quite modern, only laid out in 1883. Here again let us first turn into the various arteries, as we will call them, on the left, and we shall see that several of them lead to ancient palaces which have now been transformed into fine hotels, or have been converted into private residences, many of them most handsomely fitted up. Hitherto we have never seen them from this side, and should hardly recognise them as the same as those which face the Grand Canal, and with which we are already acquainted. Had we kept to the right, we should have found there also some bye-ways, which have



AN OMNIBUS GONDOLA: A POOR FAMILY.



THE PONTE DI CANONICA.

retained their quaint ancient character, and are worth the inspection of the antiquarian; among them may be named the Calle delle Veste, the Rio Terrà degli Assassini (or of the murderers), with the Ponte della Verona.

Going straight on, our way leads over the Ponte delle Ostriche to the Church of S. Maria Zobenigo, called also S. Maria del Giglio. As an architectural work the church is not held in much esteem, but the piazza on which it stands will be admired, and the church itself, which has a façade in the coloured baroque style, has rather a graceful interior. The Campanile of the S. Maria Zobenigo can boast of a fine peal of bells, which on high festivals are rung with such persistency that the whole neighbourhood must be driven almost to distraction. The structure itself is altogether in accordance with the style of the time, being a late seventeenth century erection (1680), when the decadence had fully set in; but the original foundation dates back as far as the ninth century, and is attributed to the Zobenigo, whose name the building still bears.

From the Campiello della Feltrina the road passes over two bridges and along the Calle Zaguri to San Maurizio, where stands the church, with its Scuola degli Albanesi. The former, we are told, is an exact copy of the Church of San Geminiano, which as late as 1810 occupied a portion of the site of the Procuratie Nuove. A true Venetian character is stamped upon the Campo San Maurizio with its striking palaces, one of the most noteworthy of which is the Palazzo Baffo, of which the façade was formerly entirely covered with frescoes by Paul Veronese. Close by is the handsome Palazzo da Ponte, in a street named the Doges Street, that runs down to the Grand Canal. Venice has more than one calle called the Calle del Dose (Doge), the name being assigned commonly to any calle that has been the place of residence of any family from which a Doge had sprung.

Crossing the bridge of San Maurizio, we come again to the Campo San Stefano, which we have seen before. We may notice now what did not then

attract our attention—the Monument that has been erected to Tomaseo, who was alike an expert in and a reformer of the Italian language, a combination, so to speak, of Adelung and Lessing in one. We ought to name another statue in the Campo Sant' Angelo, close at hand, which we overlooked. We refer to the one in honour of Pietro Paleocopa, the engineer, whose knowledge of hydraulics was of vast service to Venice, and who held office in the Ministry in 1848, the year of the Revolution. Both these monuments are modern, and as works of art in no way remarkable; but as personal memorials they are entitled to a passing notice.

Before we bring our wanderings through these characteristic calli to an end, must we not lift our eyes from them to the heaven above? Where else is the soft blue firmament so clear and transparent as it is here? It speaks for itself, and justifies the old masters for appreciating so thoroughly and extolling so highly the exceptionally favourable conditions of the atmosphere under which they were privileged to pursue their art.

But, gazing into the sky, there are two things which must inevitably arrest our attention, namely, the chimneys and the leaning turrets, so unlike anything to be seen elsewhere. It is surprising what numbers of campaniles there are with a decided inclination to one side—so great that those who look at them for the first time wonder why they have not toppled over, and brought their weight crashing down to the earth. Nevertheless, there they have stood for ages, and, if we can believe the judgment of professional men, there is no ground for apprehension, and they may stand as they are for ages yet.

Assured, then, that there is no cause for alarm, we may composedly give an undivided attention for the moment to the chimneys with which Venice is so remarkably well provided. Where else, it may be asked, can we see the like? Each separate group has its own distinct configuration. Out of the number some three or four hundred have been selected on account of the originality of their designs, and have been copied and engraved, thus forming the material for a volume entitled “I Cammini di Venezia” (The Chimneys of Venice).

Without further delay, let us now go on board the *vaporetto* that is waiting at the Iron Bridge, puffing out steam and just ready to start. It will help us to reach our goal quietly, quickly and without fatigue. The run, too, is very cheap. Our walks about Venice have necessarily somewhat tired us; the continual winding about—turning “upon one’s own axis,” so to speak—tends to become wearisome, and besides it can hardly be considered reasonable to go again through the very streets that we have walked along before. As in “Faust” we say, “Unsere Schuhe sind durchgetanzt, wir laufen auf nackten Sohlen”—Our shoes are danced into holes, and we must run upon our bare soles.

But where is our little steamer carrying us? Its course is along the canal towards San Giobbe, at the other end of the city just in front of the railway station, at the back of which is a quarter we have not yet explored. Ten minutes, or, if there should be many passengers to embark or land, a quarter of an hour, will suffice for the little run. Leaving our *vaporetto*, we land at the San Geremia station, and go straight along a broad and lengthy *fondamenta*, of cheerful aspect, and even for Venice unusually bright and sunny—a fact we had in view in timing



IN FRONT OF THE BARRACKS.

our arrival for a late hour in the afternoon. We want, if we can, to witness a sunset on the far-stretching lagoon, with the mountains in the horizon, and the islands Del Mezzo and Mestre rising from the water and looking almost so close to us as though we might touch them.

This exceptionally handsome quay is called the Fondamenta Savorgnan. On the right an elegant stone bridge leads to Cannaregio, and the gracefulness of the stone structure makes us sigh that a bridge of iron should ever have been put up in Venice. Leaving it on our left, we start for San Giobbe. As we go along we pass the Galeria Manfrin, which at one time had a considerable reputation, and still contains a few valuable pictures. Admission to the gallery may be obtained any day on the payment of a small entrance fee. In the same locality is the Palazzo Modena, said to be of about the same date, and which, if not remarkable for much else, has at least the attraction of a magnificent garden.

We cannot refrain from saying here that the visitor will always be conscious of fresh and renewed pleasure in the radiancy of the light with which the broad Fondamenta is flooded, giving a glow to every object on which it falls. We note some palazzini painted a Pompeian red, not bad examples of the noble Gothic-Venetian style; but it is with something approaching to dismay that we learn that they form a part of a large lucifer match manufactory. With all due respect for the advance and claims of industry, it is hardly possible for us not to regard it as utter vandalism that structures such as these should be degraded to workshops and desecrated by machinery, when only a hundred paces away there could have been found a site far more suitable for the purposes of commerce. We feel that we should have hoped for better things, and we go on our way deploring that the authorities should be so completely indifferent to the artistic legacies they have inherited from the past. Then, again, where the fondamenta changes its name, ceasing to be the Savorgnan and becoming the San Giobbe, close to the Giardino Botanico—containing, according to the guide-books, five thousand valuable plants, many of them rare in Europe—what should we find but a great establishment, called a “Silurificio,” which has been started by a foreign joint stock company! Above the garden with its charming verdure, where all should be bright and clear, thick clouds of smoke and chemical vapour are rolling, while the cloister of San Giobbe—well worthy of inspection—has degenerated into a passage by which the factory people make a short cut to their workrooms. It is very much the same with the beautiful islands of S. Elena and S. Marte, which seem to have been ruthlessly disfigured and laid waste without any ostensible reason. It was alleged that the claims of labour (and labour in that sense means bread) must come first. But this advocacy of labour was only a pretext behind which the authorities sheltered themselves from the demand made by the enthusiastic worshippers of art, that antiquities in a city like Venice should for ever be held as inviolate.

These professed advocates of the claims of industry had made their calculations beforehand. They knew well enough what it was that brought speculators to Venice. Here were low rents, cheap labour, and convenient water-ways. But permission to settle where they did ought never to have been given; other and more suitable land could have been found without sacrificing the charming island-retreats and precious art relics to the modern Moloch of industry.

It is in anything but a good mood that we leave the agreeable Campiello of San Giobbe, and we do not recover our equanimity until we reach the end of the fondamenta, where we get an open view of the lagoon, which hereabouts unfolds before us a prospect full of life and motion, looking like a great lake enclosed by mountains. The Isole del Mezzo, the towns of Mestre and Carpenedo, with other villages and islands, are reflected in the broad surface of the water, the prospect



VIA VITTORIO EMANUELE

St. Fosco

Tony G. 1880

being bounded by the soft outlines of the deep purple summits of the mountains illuminated by the declining sun.

Commencing our return, we take the other side of the fondamenta. An old church, built in what has been called the Jesuit style, soon arrests our attention. It is an asylum under conventual rule—in fact, a penitentiary for *pericolanti*, or fallen women. The rule of the institution is that the unfortunates must remain there for five years; during which time they receive systematic instruction either in some

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handicraft or in household work. At the end of the five years they are discharged and sent again into the world, receiving at their time of leaving a gift of necessary clothes and house-linen, which is seldom of less value than some hundred lire. Venice possesses several establishments devoted to the same laudable purpose, of which some are heritages of the past, and supported in large measure by endowments.

Here, once more, there will be no lack of interest, if we again turn off from the broad quay, cheerful as it is in the sunshine, and explore the *cul-de-sacs*, the sotto-portici, and the calli that branch out of it. In the summer-time especially, we might imagine that we had been transported to an Oriental clime. The sotto-portico "del braccio nudo" (the naked arm), and the sotto-portico "scuro" (the dark passage), as well as many others, are quite worth taking the pains to look at. Everything resembles, as it may well be imagined, the thieves' dens of Old London, only with the important difference that the people here are all as honest as the day, although, judged by their appearance, they might all be brigands. The many children, dirty enough it must be allowed, are all so well formed and well grown as to prove that the laws of hygiene are not everywhere the same: one man's food is another man's poison; that which benefits the blacksmith will kill the tailor.

After we have finished our in-and-out investigations of the dark and curious corners and *cul-de-sacs*, we will cross the stone bridge, and shall soon find ourselves in the busy street that is generally called either the Strada Nuova, or by its more ambitious name of Via Vittorio Emanuele. It is in a great degree modern, but where we now come upon it, it still belongs to the old Cannaregio quarter, and about every ten yards or so it is found to retain the different names that have clung to the particular locality from past times.

By this time it is not far from seven o'clock. It is just the hour when the great mass of labourers, whatever the nature of their employment, are returning from their work and hastening homewards for their evening meal. Everything about us seems to bear the true impress of the South: the luxuriant richness of the fruit-stalls, the cries of the lemonade-sellers, the produce of the sea brought in by the fishermen, the dishevelled condition of the women standing round about the street fountain, the gesticulations, the uncouthness of the dirty children,



A CHAIR-MENDER.



A VENETIAN NURSE-MAID.

the hurry and drive in all directions,—are one and all eminently characteristic of the South. But is it Venetian life? By no means. This is the only part of Venice in which she has any resemblance to an ordinary bustling city elsewhere. To see the true and genuine Venice, you must leave all this; you must go back along the inviting *fondamenta*, retrace your steps by the *calli* that run parallel to the canal, and so once again reach the heart of the city. The *Via Vittorio Emanuele* is not Venice: if it were not for the absence of all vehicles, we might suppose ourselves in Naples or Genoa.

All this goes to prove conclusively that Venice owes her unique character to the configuration of her canals and narrow streets. Once begin to construct more streets, wide and modern, like the *Strada Nuova*, and then farewell to the charm that has hitherto been so great: Venice would no longer be unique.

Amongst the many dreamy and, so to speak, mysterious things of the kind in Venice, the *Fondamenta della Misericordia* may be cited as one of the most impressive, leading us, without any special prompting, to revive historic memories. Thence we may cross over the *Campo dei Mori*—so-called, it is supposed, from some dark-complexioned caryatides in gay-coloured turbans—and thus get a glance Tintoretto's residence, which apparently has undergone no alteration since the fifteenth century, being a fair sample of the Gothic style. We may then notice the *Palazzo Camello*, distinguished by the representation of a camel on its front,

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and in a situation which is said to be a favourite resort of British tourists. The old palace was the property of a merchant, to whom the traders from the Levant brought their wares, always receiving from him a hospitable welcome. Opposite is the Church of the Madonna dell' Orto, a fine, late-Gothic structure with a façade so rich as to merit close inspection. It is attributed to Bartolomeo Bon, and dates from 1473. The interior of the church contains several valuable pictures, amongst them one by Van Dyck, which, according to the judgment of critics, is full of mannerisms.

Past San Marciliano, we return to the Fondamenta della Misericordia, where opposite to us we see the old picturesque "Abbey of Mercy," a very romantic ruin, dating from the tenth century, formerly, when imbedded in verdure, known as S. Maria del Val Verde. It is not time that has wrought its ravages

upon this venerable structure, but, lamentable to say, the ruthless hammer of the destroyer in 1812. Many diverse and interesting reminiscences are associated with the ancient cloister, the home from whence came Paolo Sarpi, whose statue now stands near the old Church of Santa Fasca in the Strada Nuova.

Thither, by way of S. Felice, the most attractive of fondamentas, we may now turn our steps. Our road will take us past a bridge of very singular character, being without parapets; it is dedicated to the use of a solitary house, which has only this break-neck connection with *terra firma*.

The new street, the Via Vittorio Emanuele, owns several handsome palaces, amongst them the sumptuous Palazzo of the Princes Giovanelli, a Gothic structure of the fifteenth century. It has been attributed to the ill-fated Filippo Calendario, the



A WEDDING AT SAN SEBASTIANO.



THE ABBAZIA DELLA MISERICORDIA.

tradition of whose tragical end has already been related. Scattered amongst the houses of this modern thoroughfare, not yet a score of years old, there are various relics of architecture which are alike curious and ancient : some of these belong to the so-called "Trecento" style, of which the entrance to the sotto-portico Boldù is a fine example.

The Via Vittorio Emanuele leads straight to the Rialto, taking us past several places that we have been unable to notice. One of these is the Fondamenta Faliero, which dates from the earliest period of Venetian history, and has one of those heavy stone arcades so often met with in Italian towns, but which do not accord with the general lightness so characteristic of Venice as a whole. The Campiello Leon Bianco is close by, with a palace of the same name, and not far off is a great tunnel-like sotto-portico, which leads down to the Canalazzo, and has obviously been opened by some merchant for the convenient embarkation and debarkation of his goods.

A pretty old-fashioned little place is the Campo Flaminio Corner. Thence we can get directly to the heart of the city. This time we go in the direction of the General Post Office, which we have several times left unnoticed in our walks, because on the land side, in a very narrow part of the Merceria, it has only the look of an ordinary house of moderate size, and is unlikely to attract attention; but seen from the water on the other side, this Palazzo Facanon will be acknowledged to be one of the most remarkable buildings of the fifteenth century. As the genuine porcelain, either of Dresden, Sèvres, or old Vienna, has its own special mark, so truly does this structure, with its costly stone filigree of open quatrefoils, bear the true Venetian stamp.

And here we will retire, our guidance being no longer necessary. We can only repeat what has been said at the outset, that we have followed no systematic order, but have wandered hither and thither, and we fear that, just as we may have explained inadequately much that is important, we have probably enlarged too fully on what is unimportant. All along we have endeavoured to keep one object in view, trying to make ourselves more and more familiar with the cobweb-like labyrinth which Venice seems to us to be.





THE PORT OF CHIOGGIA.

Chioggia.

"Chioggia! Home of brave men and lovely women, let me gaze on thee!"

Only a minority of the strangers, who in thousands annually flock to the Queen of the Sea, find sufficient leisure to visit the fisher-island of Chioggia, which is so intimately associated with the history of the city of Venice. And yet Chioggia well deserves to be included amongst the sights which every one should see.

Off the Riva degli Schiavoni, quite close to the Piazza di San Marco, lies a pretty little steamer; we go aboard her, and are gently rocked on the cradle of the inviting blue waters. Past Malamocco, Pelestrina, on to Sutto-Marina, past the imposing Murazzi, the magnificent bulwark that protects Venice from the force of the sea, our course leads us to Chioggia. The Murazzi, which took forty years to build (from 1740 to 1780), and on which more than ten millions were expended, are an artificial protection of the sand-hills, and are made of Istrian marble. They are three miles in length, and were greatly admired by Goethe. After a most enjoyable run of about two hours we reach Chioggia, an island of a world-wide historical reputation, and which in the days of Venezia's glory repeatedly and successfully defended the city of the winged lion from the hostile encroachments of the Genoese. The first bullet whizzed through the walls of Chioggia, and its defender was the Venetian hero, Vettor Pisani.

Still possessing a noteworthy number of imposing palaces, and various churches containing treasures of art, the heritage of the period of its glory, Chioggia



VOTIVE SHRINE IN THE LAGOON.

at the present time presents the aspect of a very bright little town, with one straight broad street, running from the blue coast on which it is situated as far as the Garibaldi Gate, where the town terminates and the road begins which leads through green fields to the bridge connecting the fishing island with the mainland. This street is indeed the whole of Chioggia, and in it is concentrated all that connects it at all with modern life. As the small bones spring from the spinal column of a fish, so do all the side streets start from this centre. Here we have our first opportunity of making acquaintance with the peculiar population of Chioggia, the original costume, appearance, and dialect of which are well worth studying; for these by-ways are not streets in the ordinary sense of the word, but mere gang-ways, house-passages without roofs, where the population lives and labours, brings up its children, weeps when its heart is oppressed by grief, and rejoices when it is cheerful. Here under God's free Heaven, before the eyes of all, is lived the simple life of these fisher-

men and sailors from the cradle to the grave.

The first thing that strikes us in Chioggia is the small proportion of men amongst the many women. Were it not for the multitudes of children that swarm around, one might almost be led to suppose that Chioggia had shared the fate of the island where the avenging gods had left none behind but women, so as to ensure depopulation in the cruellest manner.

Every step reveals to the traveller how closely connected Chioggia is with the sea. The first and foremost proof of this is given in the many boats that are lying ready to start with their heavy loads of fish and shell-fish; another is the important fish-market, with its diversified business; and the impression is further strengthened by the various occupations of the women, the children, and the few men who remain at home. Along entire passages the young and the old may be seen either preparing fishing-tackle or making nets. In other little streets, again, there are bundles of willows of the height of a man lying all about on the ground, with workers seated on the ground weaving with great dexterity the simple little baskets which are intended to receive the fish destined for export.

All these tasks are performed almost exclusively by women and children, the few men that perchance may be at home being occupied with the boats, or

in spreading their sails out on the shore, and staining them with the favourite orange and red dye, which makes all the Chioggia boats recognisable in the distance. Occasionally one of these amateur artists, whose face has been bronzed by exposure to the wind and weather, will rise to the height of daubing his sail in bold strokes with a picture of his patron saint or of the Madonna. These highly original productions, which are executed in the open air, and upon which whole potfuls of colours of the crudest shades of red, blue, and yellow



STREET IN CHIOGGIA.

are lavished, never fail to attract a circle of onlookers in Chioggia.

On Sundays and festivals the whole population sits out in the streets, work is laid aside, and tables are placed together in neighbourly fashion. In this way one long table is sometimes formed, so as to extend the whole length of the little street, in which the inevitable "tombola" is being played.

At all times of the year the extensive harbour displays an imposing number of sailing-boats, but at Christmastide they increase so as to form quite a forest of masts. Amongst them are many vessels of considerable size, which come from the more remote coasts. There is always a spirit of adventure in the Chiosotte—he cannot bear to be at home. As soon as the true "Chiosotte" (or more correctly "Chioggiotte") reaches man's estate, he is seized by an innate and unconquerable longing for the sea; but, according to ancient custom, before he leaves his home he chooses a sweetheart, and places two rings on her finger, which she must never

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FISHERMEN SETTING OUT.

remove even when she goes to sleep. These rings mark the maiden as an affianced bride. Girls who are not betrothed may not wear a ring, for to do so implies that no one else has a right to make advances to her. Having thus made sure of his rights, the lover surrenders himself to the sea, which is to him as a second bride. Wind and weather permitting, he promises to return in two years, or it may be three. Exactly thus did his father and grandfather act before him.

As the Chiogiotte is always an excellent seaman, he is much sought after as a sailor, and in his early youth he is very glad to enter upon that kind of engagement, knowing that he will be able to lay by a few lira day by day, and that the amount at the end of two or three years will be enough to enable him to purchase a coasting-boat, or even to build a regular fishing-smack, whereby his independence will be assured.

Postal and telegraph communications trouble the Chiogiotte just as little as though they did not exist. When he is away from home, he is away. The most that he does is to instruct a mate, who may be returning home sooner than himself, to give a word of greeting to the damsel of his choice, or to send by him, from some far-distant port, a bright silk handkerchief that he has selected for the future partner of his life. But a maiden of the brave island race will not grieve at this; she shares the fate of so many others that to her it implies no hardship. Was it not just the same with her mother and her grandmother? It is the lot of the women of Chioggia. And with that each one is contented. Yet this parting is only the beginning, the prelude to a long series of farewells and returns, of which life on this island is made up. The custom of separating constantly is universal, and husbands and wives have manifestly no time to get tired of one another.



FISH-MARKET ON THE ISLAND OF CHIOGGIA.

Whilst, then, the women of Chioggia—whose soft Oriental type of feature has inspired more than one great artist to portray them either on *fête* days, with their white veils artistically arranged about their heads, or on working days, with their plain white cotton kerchiefs—sit at home, weave nets, spin and sing like the Senta in the "Flying Dutchman," their husbands, fathers, brothers and lovers are sailing over the wide ocean. "When will my man come home?" That is the great question on which hinges the whole of their circumscribed existence. Summer follows spring, autumn follows summer, and then comes the winter. Although by no means especially severe upon the island, the winter is sometimes very stormy. During the long weary November nights the sea occasionally roars and rages so wildly as to arouse in the strong hearts of these simple-hearted women a sensation of doubt and even of alarm. Many a one of the men, after coming home unexpectedly, has started off again to the shores of Dalmatia, or even as far away as Egypt, or perhaps to India. But be the loved one far away or near, it is all pretty much the same to those who are left behind. He is on the sea, therefore he is away. And the sea may sometimes be perverse, and demand its victims. Geography and distance are to them unknown quantities, so that the coasts of Dalmatia and the Indian Ocean are synonymous terms—they are all the same.

The women never go beyond Chioggia, and it would be only some very special cause that would take any of them even to Venice. Consequently whatever lies beyond their line of sight is somewhere far away, and the next degree of comparison can only be expressed as *very* far away. To their limited powers of comprehension "far away" and "very far" can only be abstract ideas.

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After the rainy, stormy days of November, during which the sea assumes the lead-coloured hue of the garments of a penitent, comes the longed-for December moon, and with it a colder and a brighter season. Hope rises in every breast. The little houses on the strand are swept and garnished, and copper kettles and tin buckets are scrubbed and polished. The rich, wavy, chestnut-brown hair that the painter's brush has made famous far beyond the immediate neighbourhood—the hair, with its gleams of auburn, which distinguishes the women of Chioggia, is carefully combed and parted; the children are more carefully tended; the turkey-cock is provided with a double ration of polenta, and the shops are diligently visited to procure the various condiments that the tough palate of a seaman relishes; for Christmas, Chioggia's high festival, is at hand! On Christmas Eve the most daring, the most adventurous, even the most dissolute, if in any way he can make it possible, returns home to spend it with his belongings.

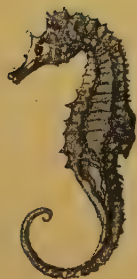
It is more than a custom, it is to him a sacred duty. All seamen are superstitious, but the Chioggiotte is superstitious to an extraordinary degree. Whoever does not succeed in getting home for Christmas has some evil to dread, for his patron saint has surely withdrawn his protecting hand from over him, if circumstances beyond his control keep him away from Chioggia.

For a week or more before Christmas a remarkable change takes place in the aspect of the fisher-island. The harbour swarms with vessels of various kinds, and from every craft, whether large or small, there floats a banner, newly decorated with ribbons by happy hands, on which is to be seen the picture of the patron-saint by whose tutelary care a father, a son, a husband, or a lover has come back unscathed. An animated bustle pervades the streets. The people stand or sit about, chatting with each other like one great family that has met together after a long separation.

No one works; if he did, it would only be to cast a net into the waters full of fish, or to throw out a line to procure for his own table the fat eel, without which no Christmas meal would be complete, or to draw forth from its retreat the excellent "cappa santa," to be boiled and consumed with the risotto. Columns of smoke rise from every chimney, and happy families sit at every table on this the most blessed evening of the year. Outside on the strand the sea is moaning. "Moan on, O sea! my little boat is rocking safe and secure in the harbour of its home!" says the Chioggiotte to himself, as he calmly draws down his red pointed cap over his furrowed brow. With his youngest child upon his knee and his arm round his good wife's waist, a stone flask of wine before him, and a short Chioggia pipe between his teeth, he discourses eloquently to his belongings of all that he has seen and done in distant lands.

Hour after hour fleets by; midnight is close at hand; a heap of wood lies piled at every house-door. At last, in jubilant peals, the bells announce the Saviour's birth. The wood is set alight, and, as presages of blessing, the Christmas fires send up their blaze to heaven.

A thousand voices unite in praise to God the Lord, who has graciously vouchsafed to allow His Chioggiotti to spend another holy Christmas on their native shore.





THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO.

Venetian Point Lace.

If lace in general, lace of any and every kind, makes an appeal to the imagination of the feminine sex, it must be owned that such appeal, in an eminently high degree, is the prerogative of Venetian point.

Venetian point! Its name seems to conjure up a world of splendour and of pride; it has the force of magic, and at its mention there rise up before us visions of the forms of beautiful but frail women—Lucrezia Borgia, Catherine de Medici, Bianca Capello, Catherine Sforza, and others of similar reputation, captivating and enchanting in their very wantonness, whose pictures authors are never weary of describing nor artists of painting.

Originally, as first designed, it was never contemplated that lace should be an adornment of personal beauty or a decoration for the throats of cavaliers: such an appropriation grew up gradually, and was only developed as the fabric itself increased in beauty and delicacy. It is really a product of Christianity; the outcome of woman's patience, humility and dexterity.

Nothing short of an industry such as that of the ants could ever have availed to convert the slender threads into tissues intricate yet symmetrical, like a spider's web. Its first and earliest dedication was to adorn an altar or to decorate an alb. But "*tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis*;" and thus in lapse of time, far from being confined to ecclesiastical purposes, its seductive charm led to its being put to more worldly uses. Lace is a fallen angel; a fallen angel, too, is Satan; and such is lace—a veritable tempter; many a heart has it made to throb with covetousness and envy.

It is, however, on another matter that we have now to speak, proposing as we do to refer to the origin of Venetian lace. She may be said to have been the first of her sisters to see the light of day; hitherto such webs had existed nowhere but in the world of Nature. Genoese lace came next to the Venetian.



LAGOON NEAR THE ISLAND
OF BURANO.

Genoa and Venice never failed to be in fierce and contentious rivalry—as it was in war, so it was in the peaceful arts. Then followed others in the train: Flanders, France, England, Saxony took up the work, becoming more and more dexterous in the manipulation of the linen thread, and more competent in design and execution. But Venice still remained supreme, Venetian point retaining its supremacy in the market, and commanding fabulously high prices.

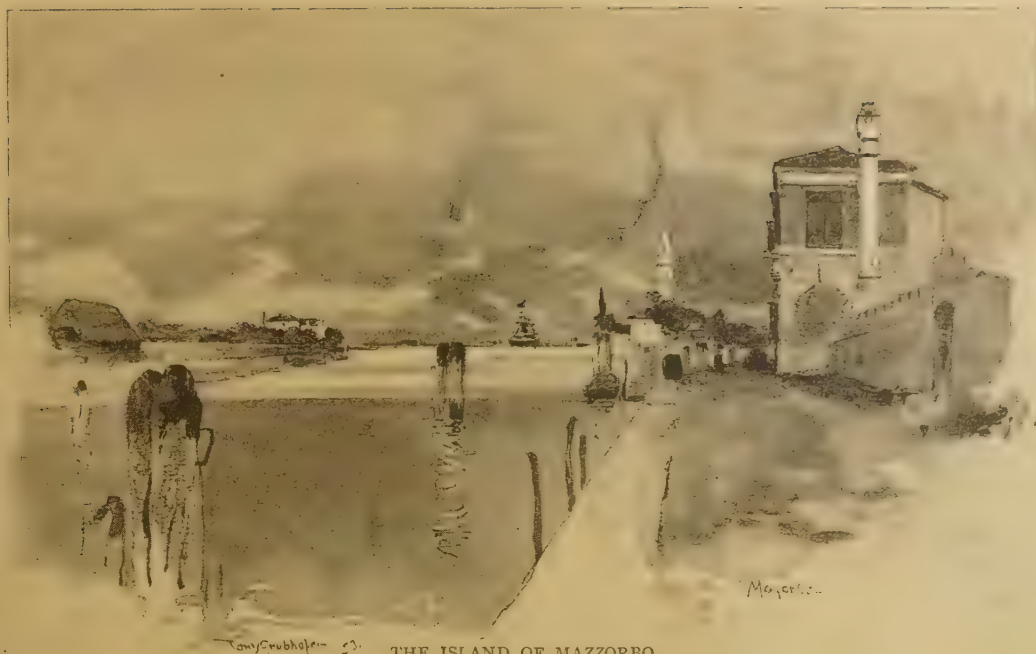
A further contribution to the lace-making art was made by some of the great Venetian circumnavigators, who, returning from their distant voyages, brought with them a remarkable tree they had discovered. This has since been often found on the islands of Jamaica and Cuba, and is distinguished from other varieties as the lace-barked Daphne. The inner bark is fibred in the most intricate and wonderful way, and its beauty prompted the lace-makers to copy it for their designs.

Nor was it only the curiosities that they discovered on land which these Venetian navigators were careful to bring home with them; they explored the depths of the distant seas, and secured such crustacea as they thought new or beautiful, and these served to suggest more designs for the lace-workers to imitate. Every expert in the matter of Venetian lace is well aware how repeatedly the patterns recur which reveal (what may perhaps be called) their inspiration from the marvels of Nature on land and water. One well-known design represents the sea-horse.

In the hands of the quick and ready island-folk design and execution were ever in close combination. The eager and delicate fingers of nuns and novices were ready to seize upon everything that would aid them in the work, which was their only pastime. Of their rough, unpolished, and clumsy earliest attempts we have no record, but we do know that it was not long before they became so accustomed to the task as to be able to turn out productions, admirable in their elaborateness and their beauty. Finer and finer in texture were the threads spun by the matrons; finer and finer in execution were the laces wrought by the damsels.

In this way, from primitive and desultory beginnings, the lace-making art grew till it was developed into a branch of commerce.

Soon afterwards the lace-pillow with its bobbins was invented and brought into common use, giving fresh help and impulse to the work. What had hitherto in the limited scale of production sufficed only for the altars and vestments in sanctuaries and oratories, could now be produced in larger quantities to meet the demands of the aristocracy for the enrichment of their attire; and thus the work extended till it became a chief feature in Venetian trade.



THE ISLAND OF MAZZORBO.

When, in consequence of the great demand, the work of the sisterhoods was unable any longer to meet the requirements of the outer world, those who had learnt the art in the religious foundations undertook to instruct girls of the lower class, and in this way the entire population of the islands began to be more or less proficient in the manufacture. At first the lacework thus produced was doubtless less exquisite in character, but it was nevertheless sure to find purchasers.

The durability of this ancient fabric was so great that lace once collected in a family became a permanent possession: it did not wear out, and lasted for generations. In Torcello, Burano, Malamocco, Pelestrina, and to some extent even in Chioggia, lace was made in considerable quantities, but over and over again from the same traditional patterns.

A day was however destined to come when this industry, established so prosperously in Venice and her surroundings, was to suffer extinction. The fall of the Republic, foreign invasions and domination conspired to tread it down to the very dust. The island-girls had to throw aside their lace pillows and to toil at contract-work for the commissariat, or at making potato-sacks; the sisterhoods stood with hands folded before their devastated altars; while the chaste Venetian matron either became a conspirator, or yielding to the inevitable, carried her harp and sang to its accompaniment in the *salons* of the French intruders. Fever, sickness of all kinds, poverty and neglect reigned supreme upon the thriving and once-favoured islands.

Venetian lace? Who was there now to ask for Venetian lace? The world had learnt that it could be supplied with lace for ordinary purposes from many another quarter. There might indeed be a few enthusiasts, of which England supplied the greater proportion, who were ready to buy choice and rare specimens; but could not they secure and carry beyond the sea all they wanted either from the desecrated nunneries, or from the deserted palaces?

And so time went on. At last, in the year 1878, a debate arose in the Chamber of Deputies, at Rome, as to how it might be possible to alleviate the

misery of the Venetian islanders. A commission was formed, and the Deputy Commendatore Paulo Fambri, the parish priest of Burano, and the Sindaco of Venice, were instructed to inquire into the extent of the suffering, and they embarked in a sailing vessel to visit the isles.

Before the fall of the Republic, health and contentment had prevailed, where now there was nothing but dejection and decay. Whence had that health and contentment come? There was but one answer to the query: the prosperity and well-being of the population had been the outcome of the industries of lace-making and straw-plaiting. These industries were now extinct; but why? Could they not be revived? Here was an idea worth considering.

Revive them? Yes, but how? When the commission came to inquire how it stood with regard to the art neglected for so long, it was found that the prospects were bad—worse even than had been anticipated, for it was practically extinct. None living, it seemed, had preserved the heritage of their forefathers. But at the very moment when hope was fading into despair, it was ascertained that there was one old woman surviving who retained the skill of her youthful days. She was seventy years of age; forty years had passed since she had handled the bobbins on her cushion, and her eyes were dim. "Never mind," said the deputies, "we must see her!" Accordingly she was sent for, and came before them tottering on her stick. Her name, as recorded in the history of Venetian lace, is given as Cencia Scarpariola. The eyes of the worthy old dame brightened when she was made to understand that it was proposed to revive the long-lost art; she saw Burano and Torcello again basking in prosperity; she saw once more for her children and her grandchildren a future full of hope and free from want. Her bodily strength was little, but her resolution was great, and with bright, keen energy she set herself to teaching what she knew. Quick and intelligent girls were found and placed under her instructions; old patterns were rummaged out, and a kind of lace-making school was soon started under efficient patronage. Competent teachers were sent for from Venice, and from distant quarters of the world; money was subscribed by private individuals and by business firms, and thus by mutual co-operation the long-forgotten industry was gradually but successfully revived. Only sixteen years ago was this project started, but the work produced has attained a standard of excellence far above what could have been anticipated. Museums have everywhere lent their best specimens of antique lace, and these have not only been accurately imitated, but have formed a basis from which new designs have been evolved.

The attainment of this high measure of excellence is a matter of true congratulation. In Venice itself, and on the adjacent islands of Giudecca, Burano, Torcello, Pelestrina and Chioggia, where lace was made in the days of old, there are now again between 5,000 and 6,000 lace-makers, working either at their pillows or with the needle, very few of them being without the superintendence of excellent instructors.

The Venetian point-lace, as made at the present day, cannot pretend, as did that of yore, to hold sole and supreme sovereignty in the lace world, but, together with the kindred produce of Belgium and of France, it forms a triple alliance which can boldly challenge all competitors.

Venetian Mosaic-work.

"The East and West alike belong to God."

For centuries the guilds of the mosaic-workers and glass-blowers had their headquarters in the immediate neighbourhood of the Rialto bridge ; but the numerous conflagrations that occurred induced the Republic to transfer the works to the island of Murano. The words of the decree ran : "Ut ars nobilis semper stet et permaneat in loco Murano." It was a decree that was as beneficial to the lovely and easily accessible little island as it was to the two branches of industry that were so closely connected with each other. In Murano could be obtained the space necessary to extend the business, for the "ars nobilis," which had originally been carried on only by a few individuals, had gradually become an important branch of trade. Already Marco Polo had recommended the Venetians to provide the populations of the shores of the Indian Ocean with glass beads, an advice which they subsequently followed. Vasco de Gama relates that in Calcutta he frequently saw Venetian beads used as currency, and passing in the same way as gold coins. The glass buttons with which the Chinese were accustomed to deck their clothes were likewise the productions of Venice, and were bartered with the sons of the Celestial Empire for valuable Chinese articles. In the sixteenth century Murano had so far advanced in skill in producing valuable objects in glass, that the Duke Visconti of Milan bought from thence a fountain of crystal glass for the sum of 3,500 ducats.

Hand in hand with the production of Venetian glass went the manufacture of the "smalti" (enamel) that was required for mosaic-work. By "smalti" must be understood glass rods of every size and colour ; perhaps little "bars" of glass might be a more correct definition. These "smalti," which in the factories of Murano are seen in little parcels, rolled up like packets of pencils, are made of spun glass, and are apparently regarded as amongst the least important productions of the place. It is only when these glistening, many-coloured bars are reduced to little blocks—some tiny, some of larger size—and are arranged side by side, that they attain rank and honour, whether in the form of an artistically-executed picture, true in colour and drawing, or as table-tops, caskets, or other *objets de luxe*. Out of minute splinters of glass, many of them hardly visible to the naked eye, but harmonious in design and colour, are produced the most beautiful ornamental articles. It is only by seeing how they are used that any one can understand the importance of the morsels, or appreciate the dexterity and patience of the workers in mosaic.

For almost the space of a century the Venetian glass and mosaic industries lay in what might be called a state of death-like lethargy. After the downfall of the Republic the art rapidly declined, for it was said, was there not enough old glass and mosaic in the deserted palaces for the wealthy to carry away with them



THE CHURCH ON THE ISLAND OF MURANO.

in return for money and fair words? No one thought of trying to produce its like, nor was there apparently the prospect of anyone being induced to do so, so that in the course of years it had come to pass that all dexterity in the art was lost. It was shortly after the year 1860 that Dr. Salviati, a lawyer, was inspired by the happy idea of rescuing the old industry from oblivion, confident that he foresaw a means of livelihood for thousands in Venice and Murano. Salviati had the strategic eye of a general, that enabled him to select the one individual who could further his plans from the mass of mediocrity. In Venice there was no one living who was acquainted with the lost art of mosaic manufacture.

But Salviati remembered that years ago in Rome he had been acquainted with a young mosaic-worker, named Enrico Podio. "He is the right man," said the ex-advocate to himself, and he wrote to him, inviting him to come and instruct others in his craft. So far, so good: but this was not enough; not only had the art of working in mosaic been lost, but how to prepare the very material itself that was necessary for the production of mosaics of the old Venetian character had also been forgotten. By a happy chance Salviati found the expert Lorenzo Radi, of Murano, who is now scarcely remembered by his own countrymen, but to whom alone the reproduction of the smalti necessary for success could be entrusted. Dr. Salviati and Enrico Podio are, alas! both dead now.

But before we leave Murano we must learn for ourselves how the mosaic is formed out of the little blocks or splinters, made from the bars of spun glass.

First of all we may see how the fine-grained so-called "mosaica lucida" (bright mosaic) is manufactured. Upon an iron plate, of which the length and breadth varies according to the size of the article to be made, is poured a layer of plaster of Paris. On this is marked out the design, which has to be chipped out, point by point, with the chisel, every point being replaced by a tiny bit of the smalti. These atoms of glass, which are placed as closely together as possible, following in outline and colour the prescribed pattern, form the mosaic, which is then welded firmly together by a composition of chalk, pulverized marble, and linseed-oil.

The larger-grained monumental mosaic, called Byzantine, such as may be seen in its highest perfection in the Church of San Marco, never died out entirely in Venice ; but in course of time it so degenerated, that the work of restoration in San Marco was entrusted to workmen who had only a poor and inadequate knowledge of the old mosaic art. It was the revival of the *mosaica lucida*, which was due to Dr. Salviati and his helper, Enrico Podio, that caused other experts in mosaic to turn their attention to this highly interesting, but quite neglected, branch of art. Thus was formed an association of mosaicists, who were successful in starting projects for recovering the lost heritage of their fathers.

As with every regeneration of art, so was it now with these first-fruits of revived mosaic. Long-forgotten secrets were to be torn from the bosom of the past, and this involved patient, toilsome, and costly experiments, many of which resulted in failure. It took years to achieve the opaqueness of the enamel, to re-discover the various shades for the gold and silver ground-work, and to procure the right colouring for the deep red-purple. Besides these technical difficulties there were also the artistic—how to produce the effect of relief, one of the best qualities of mosaic work, and which no one in the first half of our century could achieve. The departure from the careful selection of opaque enamels, of which the ancients had exclusively made use, had the disadvantage of giving monumental mosaic, which has to be seen at a distance, a blurred appearance, caused by the equal distribution of light over a flat surface, which was so admirably modified in olden times by the best workers in the medium.



CHOIR OF THE CHURCH OF S. PIETRO
(On the Island of Murano).

The mosaic-workers of Venice have, however, now entirely overcome all difficulties of their art, and are now in a position, thanks to technical and chemical aids unknown in olden times, to produce works as good in quality as those of their famous ancestors, and, perhaps, of even greater artistic value.

For the benefit of those who take an interest in the art of decorative mosaic, which has a great future before it, because it combines utility with beauty, it may be well to give some brief description of the way in which these dazzling stone-paintings are constructed.

In order to produce the smalti, or enamel, from which are made the little blocks of various sizes, that when placed side by side form the mosaic, there are mixed together in a trough, not unlike the trough which a baker uses for kneading bread, all the different materials required for the production of the pasta and smalti, consisting of iron, copper, gold, lead, soda, minium, and the like. This mixture is then poured into an earthen vessel and placed in the furnace. In proportion to the amount of heat applied, it takes from forty to fifty hours to reduce the substance to a fluid condition. When the pasta has attained the required consistency, lumps of it of about four inches in diameter are pinched out with an iron instrument, flattened in a hand-press, and then put back in the furnace, no longer heated, to cool gradually for twenty-four hours. The character of these blocks depends upon the size of the work that is to be produced, and partly also upon the colours that are required. For delicate colours glass alone is used, about one-tenth of an inch thick. As soon as this is reduced to a fluid condition such materials as are necessary are added, and the substance thus produced is baked as is terra cotta, in a furnace. Occasionally it will happen that pieces of the work require particular tints of their own, and these must be obtained by a special and a separate process for every shade.

For designs containing figures the little blocks or round disks are beaten in with a hammer which is sharpened at both ends. For purely ornamental designs, such as arabesques, the disks have to be sawn into shape. A disk of zinc, fitted to a handle, polishes the stone to the shape required. The smalti (stones) are fastened face downwards on the back of the design, which is transparent, and are then let in to the prepared cement, or background, and the paper is removed by washing. The groundwork of cement is left rough, and ridges are cut in it.

For gold mosaic very thin glass (*cartelina*) is cut into sheets of the size required, which are overlaid with gold-leaf; then the fluid substance from the caldron is poured upon them to the depth of about a tenth of an inch, and left to cool in the same careful way as are the other smalti. In order to produce the various gold and silver tints, the colour of the smalti, on which the gold has to be laid, must be changed for each shade.

These are the main characteristics and basis of the mosaic art, which the Venetians derived originally from the Arabs, and brought home with them from conquered Byzantium, to reproduce it in its highest perfection in their own renowned Basilica. This art, which seems to be inseparable from Venice, was threatening to sink for ever into oblivion, when the fortunate conception of an enterprising man procured for it a new and glorious existence.



OPEN-AIR MINSTRELS.

A Summer Evening on the Grand Canal.

"The clock is striking five, then six :
And in every home there is a stir of life."

Evening is at hand, and the hour has come when the gondoliers on the ferry-boats, that have been moored all through the daylight heat beneath the shadow of some overhanging vines, begin to think they must bestir themselves; they adjust the awnings of their gondolas, for the time of brisk business has arrived.

If you look at those old palaces, with their grand historic names, you will see that the windows are, one after another, being thrown open, and that the servants of the household are spreading the gay draperies over the parapets of the balconies, till they present a long line of colour—orange, red, and blue. Every now and then a young, graceful girl will appear between the pillars that ornament the front and look up enquiringly into the sky, or scrutinise the movements of the birds, who are so weather-wise. This may sound somewhat theatrical, but it simply means that the fair contesina has come to have a look at the weather before she decides what dress to wear for her evening toilette. Go back, fair lady, and choose the lightest and the most becoming of your wardrobe; the evening is the sweetest you could wish; the heaven above Venice is a perfect dome of azure.

Then out of one of the narrow calli that are connected with the canal by a *fondamenta*, there come three pleasant-looking girls, evidently belonging to the middle-class, for, according to local custom, they have their black veils thrown becomingly over their hair; they make their way towards the nearest gondola.

"*Traghetto!*" cries the eldest of the three, who herself is little more than a girl.

"*Pronto!*" (all right) replies the boatman she has summoned; and in a few minutes the three are out midway upon the canal.

Meanwhile, arriving from the adjacent islands are single boats laden with green provender, which they have been sent to fetch. They are being urged on with all rapidity; the industrious want to vacate the field before the procrastinators begin to work.

The first symptoms of the evening parade are not long in showing themselves. Generally the earliest indications of all will be the gondolas which have been engaged by foreign visitors, who are impatient for the hour which is to show them Venice in the glory of golden twilight. These foreigners can be easily recognised by the way their heads turn, first in this and then in that direction; their eagerness is very evident, and is in great contrast with the motionless and calm indifference of the residents who are familiar with the brightness of the scene.

Opposite the Salute every second palace, it may be said, has now been converted into a fine hotel, and as you approach you will distinctly hear the clatter of plates and the chinking of glasses. But now everywhere in front of the broad flights of marble steps are to be seen the black gondolas, with their gilded prows, awaiting the appearance of their respective owners. The gondoliers, as a rule, are well-built, good-looking young men, wearing white liveries, ornamented with coloured scarves about the waist, these of the brightest hues, and matched with the ribbons decorating the caps.

Music is now heard not far away. Whence does it come? We can make out several voices, accompanied by the tones of a guitar and violin. We are soon near enough to see that the performers are two men and a woman. They are in a boat provided with lanterns, but as yet it is too early to light them. This is one of the "*barche dei Pittori*," which are accustomed to take up a position every evening in front of the larger hotels. Applause is heard ever and again rewarding the singers as they finish each item of the programme.

The gondolas are now soon upon the move. Here is one that comes floating slowly on, attracting general attention. In it is a lady attired in a light lace costume made by Worth, reclining in the easiest of attitudes upon the silken cushions of the boat. She is dark-eyed and very charming. Who is she? Why, she is the Countess Annina M——. She has the reputation of being the belle of Venice. Then follows gondola after gondola, each occupied by the fair forms of women, all tastefully set off by raiment that becomes them best. The coolness of the water entices the youth and beauty of the city to come and enjoy its welcome refreshment.

Every now and then, perchance, you catch sight of a young maiden with her plaited hair streaming down her shoulders, and a broad-brimmed Swiss

hat covering her head; she is actually rowing herself in her own boat. You may make a wager that this damsel, pulling her own oar, is either a daughter of fair Albion or of free America.

If at first we have an impression that there is something morbid about the general aspect of the scene, this impression vanishes utterly as soon as we have turned our back upon that "Queen of the waters," the Salute, and come within sight of the broad stretch of the Canal della Giudecca with its forest of masts. What is that, we ask, which is gleaming so brightly in the evening sun? Something sparkling like pure gold, and looking as if some bright shimmering light were hanging over the homely coasting-boats. What can it be? You take your telescope, and in a moment a smile of irony plays on your lips. The golden shimmer is from nothing else than cod-fish, dried cod-fish hung in lines upon the fisher-smacks. It has come from Sweden; part of it will be disposed of here and part will be carried farther on. All this brilliancy was nothing but cod-fish! A philosophic inference is not far to seek, but this is not the place to quote it.

The nucleus of all the lively bustle is at the winged lion of San Marco. Here the procession of the gondolas divides. Some passengers go to the Lido for the enjoyment of an hour or so where the breakers roll upon the shore, whilst others quit their gondolas at the steps of the Giardinetto Reale, and betake themselves to the great Piazza. The fashionable world, however, generally returns home by the way it came, but only to re-appear at Florian's before ten o'clock, at which time the evening may be said to be at an end.

It is when the evening-star is sole monarch of the paling sky that the Grand Canal is seen in its most charming aspect. The twilight follows almost suddenly after the setting of the sun, and then the gondolas move like ghosts upon the sombre mirror of the water. Beyond the Rialto is a very different scene. Instead of all the buildings being palaces, houses of the poorer class are associated with them. On the steps of these you will see bare-footed children setting their paper-boats to float upon the water, or casting tiny nets for still more tiny fish; or perhaps, as is more likely, catching nothing, they begin to act like fishes for themselves, and plunge into the shallow margin of the cool canal.

The Venetian never learns to swim properly, but every one seems to be proficient enough to keep himself afloat. Careful fathers, sometimes in proper bathing costume, but far more frequently in ordinary clothes, will be seen dipping their youngsters in the water from a strong cord fastened round their waists; or keeping sharp watch lest they should lose their hold upon the plank, from which they are screwing up their courage to dive.

Darkness is increasing; and now upon the surface of the water will be seen thousands and thousands of flickering sparks. What is this? Is it the phosphorescence peculiar to the sea after the scorching heat of a summer's day? or is it simply the reflection of the myriad stars that are shining in the firmament above? The atmospheric effect is almost magical: nothing is plainly visible; every outline is indistinct, hardly to be made out against the dim background of the dark distance. Across the water the breeze blows cooler and cooler; we breathe more freely, and the long-strained eyes are thankful to be at rest. In the

deepening twilight ushering in the night, the mind may still be active, but the powers of vision are so obscured that they can only guess on what objects the eyes are resting.

If in the seclusion of an ordinary dwelling-room, where all the surroundings are familiar and common-place, it is always felt that the hour of twilight is that most calculated to evoke the sentiments of peace and restfulness, assuredly that hour will have a stronger influence in such a scene, and under such circumstances as these. On the calm flood, with every danger excluded, who could do otherwise than yield to the contemplative mood that steals over him, and resign himself to the soft lassitude induced by the gentle rocking of the gondola? It is not altogether an exaggeration to call it a moment of disembodiment; for the condition resembles that state of semi-slumber into which one falls when reclining in some fragrant meadow, or reposing on some mossy bank in the shadow of a wood.

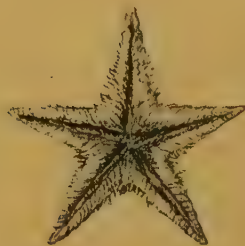
All around us the water seems to broaden and expand; as for ourselves, we feel as if, like dolphins, we were skimming along its surface; and we go on without fear, and without exertion, pervaded by the sense of satisfaction experienced in some happy dream. We are and we are not: our very individuality has disappeared, we have become part and parcel of the universe: existence is a delight in itself; there is no consciousness of its burdens. We hardly care, and almost fear to move, lest we should dispel this fair illusion.

Such are the sensations, experienced elsewhere only in dreamland, that may be enjoyed while evening passes into night upon the Grand Canal in Venice.

As we rouse ourselves, our eyes, well-rested now, are attracted by a red light moving close at hand. What is it? It is but the red lantern of the *traghetto* passing to and fro; but it rivets our gaze as the needle is rivetted to the magnet.

It was a shining lamp such as this, moving through the encircling darkness, that inspired the young child of the Muses, Giacomo Mondella, an Italian poet who has now passed away to his rest, to write:—

A wandering spirit of the night,
Doth this red gliding light appear:
Flickering, it takes its mystic flight,
Where wailing greets its spirit-ear.



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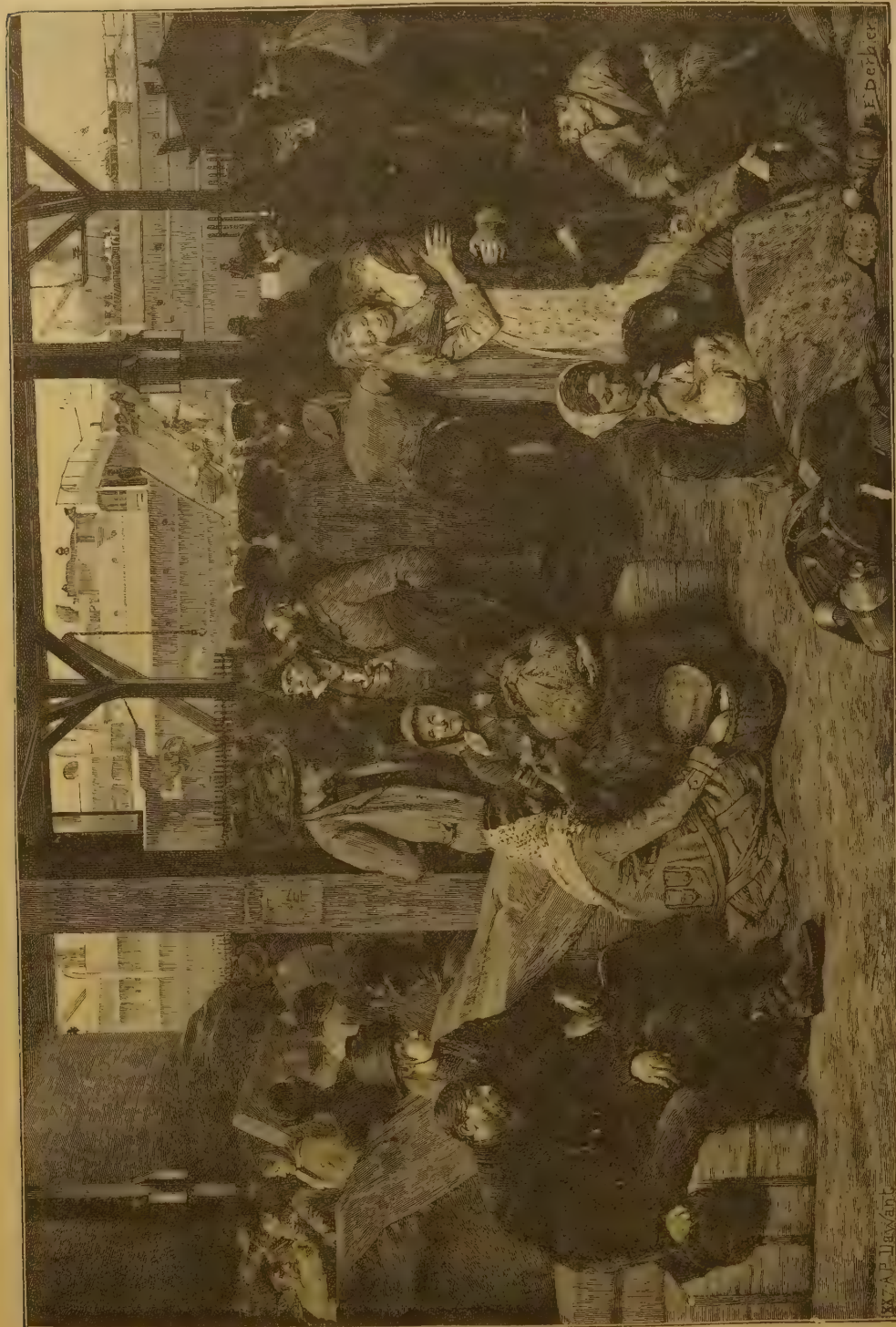


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